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ABSTRACT

A documented history of the political and social scene in which Australian schools operated from 1962-1984 is presented. The scope includes the goals and philosophy of schooling, the types of "religious" education, the philosophical bases for right of choice without economic discrimination, equity in funding, the social and economic changes occurring in Australian society, the response of educational systems to an era involving new social structures and problems, the impact of developing technologies, the denial of employment to many, and the offer of new opportunities for leisure to all. The views of political parties and interest groups are presented in detail; the book also offers a critique of material written during the period under review. There is an analysis of Ministerial guidelines and Commonwealth Schools Commission responses. (BZ)

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# Politics and Sociology

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# of
# Funding
# Australian Schools: 1962-84

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# *Introduction*

This monograph is the first of a series dealing with *Schooling and Employment in Australian Society*. The title suggests that the scope will be wide, if not fully comprehensive. The material will cover goals and philosophy of schooling, the types of 'religious' education, the philosophical bases for right of choice without economic discrimination, equity in funding, the social and economic changes occurring in Australian society, the response of educational systems to an era involving new social structures and problems, the impact of developing technologies, the denial of employment to many, and the offer of new opportunities for leisure to all.

The evaluation of the work will not be possible until a number of monographs, at least, are launched. There are limitations imposed by not producing a single comprehensive work. For example, this first venture provides only a general historical background. It is a resumé of the period 1962 to 1984; it seeks to clarify a few of the main issues and events. It cites the literature and refers to the conclusions derived from budget analyses by Margaret Gartland and from my own studies of non-government school-parent funding during the first eighteen months of implementation of the Karmel Report.

However, the main emphasis is on the Labor Party promises prior to the December election of 1972, and on the terms of reference of the Interim Committee of the Schools Commission. 'Needs of schools' indirectly questioned the status of schools with 'high resources', a term which the Committee was left to define. Reference is made to the recommendation for phasing-out grants to such schools and to the response of the Labor Cabinet. The welfare of all Victorian non-government school parents was affected adversely by reduction of the State per capita grants in real terms in 1974 and 1975, and by the 1974 Federal Budget reduction of the concessional taxation deduction for education from $400 to $150.

The period from 1975-84 has been one of varying division, increasing tension, and so-called competition for 'scarce' resources. The advent of State and Federal Labor Governments in Victoria (1982) and Canberra (1983) produced, initially, some stability and satisfaction in government school circles and, for one reason or another, a threat of hardship or possible crisis in the non-government sector. Some schools, almost entirely in the non-Catholic sector, have been exposed to instability by reduction in grants and uncertainty for the future. Catholic schools are concerned about regulations and enquiries which increase intrusion and are seen as movement towards integration.

As is suggested in the opening paragraphs, the text does not deal either completely or rigorously with certain critical issues: the philosophies of the Karmel Committee; the goals of 'true' and valuable education and the best environment to attain them; arguments for *right*; the minutiae of financial analysis, particularly estimates for items excluded from costing government school per pupil expenditures.

The views of political parties and interest groups are presented in detail - as one might expect from a title emphasising the 'politics and sociology of funding'. The book would fail if it did not offer a reasonable critique of what has been said and written during the period under review. Such an evaluation demands a consideration of fundamental principles, but they may appear as a response rather than as a positive approach developed from a systematic philosophical analysis. This is not to deny that a weight of argument grows from such a critique.

The poor and shallow quality of much that has been written during the past decade can be traced to the failure to clarify principles, and this can be associated with the loose, ambiguous, and changing meaning of key words. In addition, there can be no valid answers unless scholars are prepared to ask the right questions.

Consideration has to be given to the following:

* Citing percentage rather than money increases is misleading; cf. Schools Commission Triennium 1979-81, Report for 1980, Appendix, Table B1.

* Total Federal and State budget funding should be considered in calculation of government expenditure/benefits to schools.

* Keep dollars - thousands, millions and billions - in perspective. Spaull writes of 1977: 'The conflict revealed how brittle the relationship between Minister and Schools Commission was, as the dispute centred on $5 m. out of a total of $570 m.'§ There was equal tension within the Schools Commission. The $5 m. was to be divided as follows: $2 m. to bring Level 1 and 2 schools towards '20 per cent' funding; $3 m. as additional capital for non-government schools (Rolling Triennium 1978-80: Report for 1978, 3.20).

  The total expenditure - Federal and State - on primary and secondary schooling was over three billion dollars. Was the $5 m. allocation reasonable? Was the opposition a matter of principle? Was the grant considered to be 'the thin edge of the wedge' by Commission members who were concerned with State school interests.

* In any comparison, non-government school grants should be compared with government school costs for the same period. Current data are not easily obtained, as the grants for calendar years have been based on or compared with government costs in earlier financial years. Commonwealth grants have, since 1974, been 'indexed', 'supplemented', 'out-turned' for inflation.

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§ Spaull, A. in Patience and Head (eds), p. 137.

* For some years, State grants to pupils in non-government schools have been reported as 20 per cent of government school operating costs. How are these costs estimated and what are the time bases used?

* What does one understand by financial accountability? (It is, of course, only a part of total accountability for the educational and school care of the pupil.) Non-government schools are fully accountable to the Commonwealth Government (through Schools Commission questionnaires, including 'SRRI' and 'Income Assessment Procedure') and to the Victorian Government (through Form C.G.1). Contrary to popular opinion, the use of moneys spent on government schools is not so readily ascertainable from the States, and is only released after a considerable time delay.

* How does one distinguish between ordinary or basic needs, common to all children, and special needs requiring additional support?

* In socio-economic studies, compare the occupational status of fathers and mothers in a school with similarly structured families in the community, not with males and females in or eligible for the work-force. Vide the error in the Radford Report: *Schools for the ACT (1983)*, Volume 1, Tables 5.8 and 5.9.

* Comparison of government and non-government schools by either basic grant or special needs is not possible, because statements of recurrent expenditure in individual government schools are not available.

* Non-government school costs should be compared with costs in government schools of the same size and structure, e.g., numbers in junior secondary/middle secondary/Year 11/Year 12.

* Indirect benefits, e.g., freedom from municipal rates, and parent benefits, e.g., book allowances and transportation, should not be presented as favouring non-government school children; cf. the Report (July, 1983) of the Victoria State Board of Education, 1.4. They are available to all schools and children attending them.

* One would not have to be a Wittgenstein (1889-1951) to realise that there is something imprecise about the language used by commentators on non-government schools: state aid/equitable funding; private/independent/non-government; wealthy/rich/elite/high resource; basic needs/special needs; right/liberty; equality/equity; freedom to choose/capacity to choose ; choice/reasonable choice ; high initial effort/continuing or maintenance of effort; massive aid.

Where references are to papers published in books, the full title of the book is given in a *Bibliography* (pp. 348-351). Systematic documentation (1962-84) from the media is limited to Melbourne's daily papers and to *The Australian*; also, to the Catholic press of the eastern seaboard. This suggests emphasis on Victoria, and on Catholic opinion in the eastern States. However, the wider Australian picture during the last five years has been given adequate attention.

The titles of newspaper articles are provided, except in the case of letters where editorial staff are responsible for sub-titles. If the reporter's name was cited, it is included. Men's personal names are given by the initial; women's names are shown in full.

Where a commentary is long, it is set as a footnote. Otherwise, it is included with references at the end of the chapter. Editorial practices are based on principles in *Style Manual*, 3rd edition, AGPS, Canberra, 1978. A list of *Abbreviations* (pp. 352-353) offers a guide to acronyms. A *Glossary* (pp. 354-363) of terms is accompanied by the numbers of those chapters where the subject, often under a sub-head, is given prominence; incidental reference, elsewhere, is neglected. An *Index of Names* (pp. 364-366) lists persons concerned with politics and education, but does not include journalists unless their writings have specialised in educational matters and have provided critiques.

The development of high technology/low cost electronic typewriters, with capacity for disk storage, attractive daisy wheel faces and ability to justify proportionally spaced types, led to the use of such a machine. Despite its quality, it was not possible to produce a long work, involving constant up-dating of text. Some chapters have been prepared, and all superscript references have been inserted, using this typewriter, but 85% of the text has been set with a low cost word-processing system, using a printer employing identical daisy wheels. I am grateful to younger colleagues - to Br A.P. O'Flynn for introduction to the use of software, to Ilias Grivas for patience and company as I ran preliminary print-outs and, in particular, to Br J.B. Boonen for developing a system enabling me to submit camera-ready copy for make-up of this book.

I am indebted to Mrs Ann Seeto and to Mrs Margaret Gartland who, over a long period, generously helped in typing draft manuscript.

I wish to thank those who have given me friendship and the benefit of their knowledge of the educational scene: Neil Dewan, John Doyle, and John McKenna. They have helped to clarify the early chapters. Margaret Gartland has considered the whole text. I hope that the end-result recognises her contribution to the analysis of Education costs and to the welfare of all children in non-government schools.

I am grateful to the staff of the Commonwealth Schools Commission for consideration during two visits to Canberra, and to the Victorian Office, Commonwealth Department of Education, and officers of the Victorian Department of Education, for provision of material. My thanks are due to the Faculty of Education library, Melbourne University, and, as in the past, to staff of the State Library of Victoria.

18 February, 1985 K.G. Mortensen

# *Preface*

This preface gives some idea of my participation in the Education debate from 1965 - 1975. A book: *Education and Family Socio-Economics* was published in 1977, but other activity in the period 1976-84 has been indirect.

Evidence is now available to test my principles and the economic argument advanced during 1973-1975. One should not appeal to past accuracy but, at least, it gives some ground for 'continuing effort'.

## APOLOGIA

The points of argument and differences on 'State Aid' have not varied much over the years. I have before me a letter submitted to *The Age* on 4 May, 1965; it dealt with the still current objections to parents' choice of non-government schools, viz., their alleged divisive influence, use of indoctrination, and fostering of privilege. [1]

In *The Age* (1969), I gave reasons why State school pupils were lagging behind students of independent schools in the battle for Commonwealth secondary scholarships and in securing Science 'talent search' awards. Families of the latter needed the money for fees; science teachers worked in their 'spare' time, beyond the call of duty, to encourage students. [2]

In a letter to *The Advocate* (1969), I stated:

> For many years, the ALP has sought an enquiry into the needs of schools, and Mr Whitlam recommends an Australian Schools Commission. There is certainly a need for information as the lack of well publicised, accurate, comprehensive data is causing confusion and promoting divisive influences in the community.[3]

When the Karmel Committee published its report in May, 1973, there were reservations in a few isolated pockets only. The present writer occupied one. A critique in *News Weekly* noted that the Interim Committee's deliberations had been restricted by terms of reference supplied by the Labor Government. It also suggested that many of the proposed measures would produce a close union of Church and State, which could raise constitutional issues. [4]

It is reasonable to define my position by quoting salient points from the *News Weekly* article (8 August, 1973). The relevant section is quoted verbatim: it is considered that the comments are still valid in 1984.

Despite painstaking work in limited time, the Karmel report Schools in Australia is a disappointing document.

1. It contains many unsubstantiated value judgments.

2. It strips many parents and children of the right to some help - an entitlement and principle recognised in the States Grants (Schools) Act, 1972.

3. It introduces an ill-defined 'index of resource usage', based on the *average* State school. The index is not open to independent check (6.2).

4. A school has to be sub-standard (judged from inputs, not outputs !) to get support. If it receives aid, the Commission, in conjunction with its field officers, will 'monitor' its performance (13.16).

5. The Committee states that it 'favors less rather than more centralised control over the operations of schools' (2.4). However, its plans demand a new bureaucracy to assess non-government schools, allocate funds and ensure 'accountability' of grants which do not meet major recurrent costs.

6. To those getting aid - in whatever degree - it has introduced uncertainty, dependence on judgments by a Schools Commission and on political decisions at Budget time. The 'judgments' will be nominally based on quantitative factors, but these will be largely determined by value considerations. An example would be class sizes.

7. The Committee recommends the provision of'statistical returns on the use of human and material resources in the conduct of the schools for which the grants are made (13.17)'.

What will happen if a school wishes to keep its structure (which is effective because of initiative, sacrifice and discipline), keep its index and reduce the burden of fees to parents?

8. The Committee states that no attention has been paid to 'the plight of parents' (6.38).

9. It expects that 'the level of private contributions to non-government schools will rise in proportion to increases in average income (6.55)'. Such policies do not permit freedom of choice for parents on low incomes. [5]

The writer responded to statements, made in 1973 by Dr J.F. Cairns, that low-income parents did not send children to 'private' schools; also, that the concessional taxation deduction was administered 'unfairly'.[6]

During mid-1974, the Federal Treasurer, Mr Crean, visited Christian Brothers' College, St Kilda, which was in his electorate. When I asked privately whether his Government intended to alter the concession, he answered 'No' without hesitation. However, in handing down the Budget on 17 September, Mr Crean announced a reduction of the concession from $400 to $150. [a]

According to the *Catholic Weekly's* Political Correspondent in Canberra, it was not Mr Crean's Budget: 'Everything last week pointed to the Treasurer being only the nominal sponsor. The press and many politicians were hailing Dr Jim Cairns,..as the true architect.' [b]

I pointed to the impact of the change: the benefits given to pupils in low-resource schools were largely taken away from their parents by the new taxation policy.[c] Finally, it may be noted that the introduction of a new system of tax rebates has done nothing for the low-income earner with children at non-government schools. Introduced by the Labor Government, the rebate system was retained by the Fraser Government, even though Ministers were aware of anomalies. Mr Fraser's promises (in his election statement of 1975) to restore taxation concessions to their former level were not honoured. [d]

---

[a] In spite of a heading 'Poor get richer: rich get poorer' (The Sun, 18 September, 1974), the Finance Editor, Kenneth Bell, did make one effect clear: 'While the reduction in the concession is aimed at the wealthy who send their children to private schools, there will be many parents, particularly those with children attending Roman Catholic schools, who will feel the pinch.'
For the remainder of the year, the reduction was a subject of criticism in the columns of the Catholic press. In replying (21 November, 1974) to the 'particular concern' of the Catholic Education Commission of Victoria, Michael Delaney, private secretary to the Prime Minister, stated that 'money is best spent in the education field in directly improving facilities rather than by granting concessional allowances'. This judgment amounted to 'Government knows best' and suggested what had become obvious to the few analysts who bothered to consider the issue: it was 'robbing Peter to pay Paul'.

[b] From our political correspondent in Canberra. 'Politics: Bigger say by Caucus seen on "bitter" budget.' The Catholic Weekly, 29 August, 1974.

[c] Mortensen,K.G. The Age, 25 September, 1974 and 15 February, 1975; see, also, the letters of K.W.Gould in The Age, 10 December, 1974 and The Advocate, 19 December, 1974.

[d] Mortensen, K.G. (The Catholic Weekly, 15 January, 1976) argued for 'a realistic education rebate, adjusted for inflation...as an addition to any scheme providing common benefits for all taxpayers'. J. Morley's 'Protest over Education Tax "rip-off"' in the issue of 9 June, 1977 stated: 'The only thing that the Prime Minister, Mr Fraser, has done to end the Whitlam Labor Government's "tax rip-offs on non-government school parents" was to adopt it as his own policy, according to the Australian Parents Council.'

In 1973, I also drew attention to the fact that recurrent grants to low-resource Catholic schools were at the expense of high-resource non-government schools with, in addition, a net saving to the Federal Government.[7] However, it was not until late 1974 that I published a thorough study of all sources of support - Federal/State grants and concessional taxation deductions during the first eighteen months of implementation of the Karmel Report. The conclusion was as follows:

> During the period, 1 January, 1974, to 30 June, 1975, the school-parent partnership is worse off than under the Federal Liberal-Country Party policies of 1972 and the commitments then made by the State Liberal Government of the Hon R.J. Hamer.*

These State commitments (grants of 20 per cent of recurrent expenditure on pupils in Victorian State schools) were not honoured in 1974 and 1975.[8] Representations to Mr Brian Dixon, Assistant Minister of Education, by Margaret Gartland on behalf of the Parents and Friends' Federation of Victoria and, later, by the present writer in a secondary role, led to an increase of State primary and secondary grants, in money terms, of 60 per cent from 1975 to 1976.

### *The critique of Professor Max Charlesworth*

In an article in *The Catholic Worker*, July/August, 1975, Max Charlesworth, at present Professor of Philosophy and Dean of the School of Humanities, Deakin University, stated:

> *The Renewal of Australian Schools* is a collection of critical essays on the Karmel Report and I think that it is fair enough to say that its general tone is a rather negative and grudging one...None of the authors perhaps go so far with this tactic of praising with faint damns, as Brother K.G. Mortensen. In his essay, 'Finance for Independent Schooling', Brother Mortensen seemingly reaches the astonishing conclusion that Catholic schools are in general terms worse off after Karmel than before! [9]

As I might have expected from my friendly associations with *The Catholic Worker*, Max Charlesworth published my reply without delay.[10] It stressed that the critique went beyond the Karmel Report which offered moderate, not 'massive' recurrent grants to Catholic schools, and that these benefits were reduced by adverse movements - reduction in both Victorian State grants to schools and Commonwealth taxation concessions to parents.

---

* Mortensen,K.G. in D'Cruz and Sheehan (eds),155. G.E.F. Hughes of Sydney came to the same conclusion in a letter to The Advocate, 28 November, 1974; he did not consider the aspect of State grants - either in Victoria or NSW. In The Catholic Weekly, 26 December, 1974, he presented a careful exposition of taxation returns under Section 82J of the Act, concluding that the change in the concessional deduction involved 'a very heavy burden which is not compensated by any comparable increase in State Aid'.

Secondly, the Karmel Report did not examine the failure of State sources to fund the non-government sector equitably, particularly in respect to building costs for both secondary and primary schools. To this day, State Governments do not offer capital funding to non-government schools. During the last decade, the Budgets brought down by Liberal Governments in Victoria have supplied over half a billion dollars to the government sector for building; this does not include Commonwealth grants.

Furthermore, I had claimed that, in 1974, the non-government school share of the Victorian State Budget was 4 per cent, a figure which was subsequently confirmed in many statements by Senator Carrick as Commonwealth Minister for Education.[11] The main argument of the Fraser Ministers for Education was always that the Federal Government's distribution of funding to the government / non-government sectors was determined by the need to reduce the imbalance - favouring the government sector - found in State Budgets.

My position was partly a matter of principle, as will be evident from the *News Weekly* article of 8 August, 1973, and partly a judgment based on financial data. With regard to principle, the position did not differ from that of Patricia Hince, a frequent columnist for *The Catholic Worker*.

Using the same space slot as Max Charlesworth, she had written as early as September, 1973:

> I have seen a number of Catholic comments on the report along these lines - this one is quoted from a Victorian parish newsletter: 'Though it is a matter of considerable regret that the Karmel Report will be the occasion of hardship for many Catholic and non-Catholic Independent Schools, speaking from a purely selfish point of view, it will be of great benefit to our school system here.' In the face of a substantial hand-out of real money, that former passionate concern for educational justice seems to have shrunk to regret that the wealthy aren't included in the hand-out.
>
> Three points could be made here. Firstly, it is by no means certain that all parents who send their children to high-fee-charging schools are wealthy. Some parents prefer the education of their children before a comfortable and affluent life. Secondly, those who really are wealthy have already been taxed at a high rate. They have made a direct contribution to the redistribution of money in the community through taxation, a legitimate device for this end. To use schools as an additional financial levelling device seems both morally and educationally unsound. Thirdly, by paying fees to a private school, a parent saves the State about 80% of the cost of educating his child. It therefore seems reasonable and just for a parent to expect some return of his contribution to State education.[12]

I agree. We have a system which permits parents with children in government schools to spend their disposable income on educational 'extras', or other 'luxuries' above the 'community standard' - without penalty. Some State school parents can provide significant benefits for their children, not possible with others. Within any one government school, income and social factors create a situation which is not 'egalitarian' - to use the modern jargon.

On the other hand, parents with children in non-government schools are penalised (by reduced grants) if they pay fees to exceed 'community standards' in recurrent resources. The Index developed by the Commonwealth Schools Commission, and applied to each 'non-systemic' school, cannot be used in comparison of any individual government school. This is not to say that estimates could not be made, quite easily, by those with access to the data and interested enough to make the effort.

Needless to say, this argument should not be used to deny the role of Government in 'discriminating' on certain points or in favour of certain groups that are disadvantaged. However, it is an appeal for equity, and a little common sense, in treating all parents of similar means and family responsibilities by the same criteria.

One might now turn back to early 1966, when the Federal Executive of the ALP decided that all members of the Parliamentary Party should vote against any proposals of the Federal Government to extend State Aid. To his credit, Mr. Allan Fraser, ALP member for Eden-Monaro for 23 years, bitterly opposed this order. The principle he stated is still valid: 'The education of his children is the fundamental right of a parent... no man should be penalised for exercising it.' [13]

### *The critique of Father Frank Martin*

The comment of Father F.M. Martin, member of the Interim Committee and, until 1980, of the Schools Commission, was equally critical of my paper in *The Renewal of Australian Schools*. He stated:

> The longest article in the book is contributed by Brother K. G. Mortensen who presents his, by now, fairly familiar thesis that the Report discriminates against non-government schools. There would be wide differences of opinion as to the validity of Brother Mortensen's argument and of his interpretation of some of the statistical tables he provides.[14]

A reply was published in *The Advocate*. Conclusions were summarised (as in the Charlesworth correspondence) and the last sentence read: 'It is better to be attacked than ignored, but I still await a scholarly critique.' [15]

Father Martin's closing reference to 'interpretation' can only refer to the main arguments deduced from the tables:

- The lack of net benefit, during the first eighteen months of 'Karmel', to the non-government Category H school-parent partnership when full consideration was given to State and Federal (including taxation) policies.
- The likelihood of a growing gap between government and low resource non-government schools, which could not be bridged by 'continuing effort'. The concept of 'gap' had been introduced by Margaret Gartland, who gave it quantitative expression by her careful analysis of expenditures for primary and secondary pupils in Victorian State schools. I endeavoured to consider movements in real terms and to assess the 'continuing effort' necessary to close the gap or prevent its expansion.

'A Media Resource Book' : *Forces and Issues in Australian Politics* included Charlesworth's and Martin's reviews but not my comments in reply.[16] A review of *The Renewal of Australian Schools* by Jean Holmes made no reference to the article.[17] It was also ignored by Barry Hill of *The Age*,[18] and it may be noted that my conclusions were at variance with the overall interpretation of this paper.

When D'Cruz and Sheehan wrote their closing paper for the second edition of *The Renewal of Australian Schools,* they described the development of my theses and other features of the argument as 'illuminating'[19] ; this was not the view of the Catholic authorities in Melbourne. The passage of time has confirmed the base data and the general conclusions, viz., first, the relative disadvantage of pupils in low-resource schools in spite of the substantial fees paid by many low-income parents; secondly, the sacrifices of many parents in the non-Catholic sector who desire a high quality education for their children and are penalised for their interest.Yet these facts are regarded as irrelevant to 'needs' by State school lobbyists.

## PARENTS' INCOMES IN A CATHOLIC NON-SYSTEMIC SCHOOL

A major work: *Education and Family Socio-Economics: A Case Study 1969-74* (K.G. Mortensen) was released in 1977. It was a survey of parents' occupations and incomes in a single secondary school, Christian Brothers' College, St Kilda, Melbourne.

The essence of the study was comparison with similarly structured families in the Australian / Victorian community. As the book stated, 'any comparison with all Victorian male wage-earners is invalid for it does not recognise the character of the group of school fathers in respect to age, family responsibility, etc.'[a] Publication in 1977 did not date the work, as comparison demanded relevant income data for Australian families during 1969-74. This only became available in Australian Bureau of Statistics References of 1975 and 1976, i.e., after the survey was conducted.

When put in broad terms, the Case Study suggested that the occupational status of the fathers of students at lower secondary levels was higher than for the average Australian school, but that, at Year 12, it was lower.

While there were, in the school, a number of low-income disabled fathers and single-parent families, headed by the mother, the intake of children of process and service workers, and labourers, was deficient.[b] About 85 per cent of working mothers were in low-level occupations; the remainder were nurses, teachers, secretaries, while one was a technician.[c] The children of migrants were well represented. When assessed on an income basis, the income of an average family in the school was not sharply different from a similarly sized family in the community.[d]

Where the boy was the son of a father of low occupational index / income, he generally came from a small family. Children from larger families were not well represented, if the father was of low occupational index / income.[e] As the school offered fee concessions to those in need, there was no discrimination on the part of the school.[f] However, it is likely that breadwinners of large, relatively poor families were not approaching the school.

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a. Mortensen, K.G., 1977. Education and Family Socio-Economics, 144 and 159; cf. 34. Also, see G.Caldwell (Schools for the ACT, Vol II, 21-51) who compared the occupational distribution of Radford College fathers/mothers and the male/female ACT population. He recognised (p. 32), but not sufficiently, differences in age categories. Vol I of the Report, 51-52, reproduced and used his tables uncritically.

b. Mortensen,K.G., op. cit., 10-11, 35-44.

c. ibid., 41-43.

d. ibid., 159-163.

e. ibid., 160-174.

f. It is relevant to quote a statement from the Headmaster's Report (Annual Presentation Night, 1983) a decade later: 'As a Christian Brothers' school, CBC St Kilda is committed to the policy of keeping school fees charged to parents to an absolute minimum; a fundamental policy of the College is to educate as many boys from Catholic families as we can. A boy who has been enrolled in good faith, is not sent away from the school solely on the grounds that his parents cannot afford the school fees. There is always the possibility of a confidential negotiation of the payment of school fees between the boy's family and the Headmaster.

The fault lies not with Catholic secondary schooling, but with a society which forces the poor to seek a free government school education by denying them the justice of exercising a reasonable choice. *

In this context, Trethewey (1970) has stated that 'it is arguable that being a Catholic, more especially a poor Catholic, in Australia involves inequalities in educational opportunity, as the Catholic educational system has faced, and continues to face very serious shortages of accommodation, staff, and facilities'. [20]

I worked at this school in Category H - the lowest resource on the Karmel scale - for twenty years. Pressures were far greater in 1962 than in 1972 - if one judged only by class sizes, teaching loads, and support staff.

It is invidious to compare the situation in Catholic secondary schools with what Douglas Whitton callously called 'the plight of parochial schools - the emotional coinage of the State Aid movement'. [21] The writer does not have to apologise for his concern for the parish primary schools adjacent to C.B.C., St Kilda. The overload was common to both primary and secondary schools, and the detail of the *Case Study* questions statements, such as :

T. Roper (1971):

* 'The Catholic colleges are well endowed, the parochial schools are poor. I cannot understand how the Catholic community can tolerate such grotesque differences in the quality and quantity of education provided in its schools.'[22]

F.J.Hunt (1970):

* 'Much could be done to distribute the available resources more evenly across the socio-economic groups within the Catholic system of schools.' He writes of a 'limited degree of concern to achieve equality' and, yet, strangely, he recognises that the teaching orders have attempted 'to serve a wider socio-economic range within society than other churches have attempted to do.' [23]

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* The Catholic Weekly has regularly advertised fees in parochial and regional schools in Sydney. 'School fees rise', 9 December, 1979, quotes an official statement: 'It has been possible to keep the new fee scale to the amounts shown only by affecting stringent economies in the Commission's budget.' Fees per term in Year 7 rose from $68 (1st term, 1980) to $93 (3rd term, 1982). This was a rise of 14 per cent per annum. Cardinal Freeman stated in the issue of 18 July, 1982 ('School fees up'): '...school fees have been kept at as low a level as possible out of consideration for parents, as the aim consistently has been to provide for all Catholic parents who seek to enrol their children, taking into account that the economic capacity of many is restricted.' Details of concessions for second and third children were provided, with a note that the fourth and subsequent children would be educated without charge.

- P.J. Pledger (1970):

> 'Too many of the Catholic schools, especially among the boys' schools, reduce to empty nonsense the assertion that all children are entitled to a Catholic education. Their internal policies operate against the lower socio-economic groups usually in the name of maintaining academic status.' [24]

- R.T. Fitzgerald (1976):

> Catholic schools 'were not placed to cope with the demands of secondary education for all. Like other colleges and high schools they had operated in the pre-war period...for small academic and/or financially advantaged elites'. [25]

These four statements are generally inaccurate and, at the best, misleading. They ignore historical conditions. Pledger's phrase, 'entitled to a Catholic education', presumes a method of adequate funding that would pay for it. Few Catholic parents had the income to educate their children, but the schools never deliberately excluded low income families. Those who were well-off were petitioned by Nuns and Brothers to support poor students. State Junior Government scholarships were not for 'open' competition, and only 20% were available to children in Catholic schools. As for maintaining academic status' or, more correctly, standards, this was an educational and economic necessity. Prior to World War 2, too many doors in private employment were closed to Catholics, and their only avenue to a job was competitive performance in entrance exams for the public service.

In 1971, the Archdiocese of Melbourne showed concern about providing an education system 'equally available to all who wish to use it', [26] but money could not buy religious vocations or stop exits from the religious life. The solution lay primarily, not in 're-distribution' within the Catholic community, but in a sense of justice in the wider society.

Jennifer K. Matthews of the ACER contributed a thoughtful review of my 'Case Study'. She wrote *inter alia*:

> Because this study deals with a small sample of students within a single school, its findings cannot with confidence be generalised to any other schools within the Catholic sector or the Australian education scene in general. It would have been more fruitful to continue the study in a wider sample of Catholic schools. Perhaps this is something Brother Mortensen could consider undertaking in the future if he wishes to make a further contribution to the argument on the place of independent schools in the community and the extent to which they should be publicly supported. [27]

The monograph had concluded, admittedly on general considerations, that C.B.C., St Kilda, was similar in its clientele to many other boys' schools run by religious congregations. As for further surveys, I could not conduct them without invitation. There is still a lack of studies of comparable schools in the various sectors, and one might speculate on the reasons for the lack of interest.

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# 1 *Pre-Karmel*

## BACKGROUND

Prior to 1962, politicians generally were reluctant to raise the 'State Aid' issue. Sectarian divisions were regarded as potentially ruinous to any party. As to the claim for justice, it had been made again and again, forcefully, even from the days of Archbishop Vaughan (1834-1883) in Sydney, but it got nowhere.[1] J.E. Bourke has stated: 'State politicians professed sympathetic interest in proposals to assist, but claimed that money from federal sources was inadequate to permit more than the existing marginal assistance, while federal politicians took refuge in the fact that education was a state responsibility.'[2]

The spectacular gesture of closing Catholic schools in Goulburn for a week in 1962, amid signs that the independent 'system' might crumble, awakened political realists to the fact that the denial of State aid could prove costly to the taxpayer. It became clear that the State system would have to be expanded to accommodate children, whose parents could no longer afford non-government school education.

## PRIME MINISTER MENZIES

The Hon R. Menzies, in a series of addresses over a long period, had shown his respect for the non-government school system. In 1963, personal conviction moved with political advantage, as the Liberal-Country Party Coalition had come close to defeat in 1961, and it needed to win preferences from the Catholic vote concentrated in the Democratic Labor Party.

Prime Minister Menzies had stated: 'The fact is that education, except in Commonwealth territories, remains a function for the States. Therefore we are dealing with a problem in which the Commonwealth does not have power over, or responsibility for education in the States or by the States.'[3] However, Menzies was conscious that this principle did not preclude financial benefits to students, with a safeguard of payment through the States. As P.D. Tannock and I.K. Birch pointed out in 1972:

> In 1946 the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Australia was amended to include Section 51 (xxiiiA). This is known as the Social Services Amendment and, amongst other things, gives the Federal Government power to make laws ' with respect to the provision of benefits to students' in all States of Australia. The term 'education' was not mentioned in the Amendment, and the 'benefits to students' power is little known or used. It is nevertheless an embracive one which may have profound consequences for the future development of Australian education and the reconstruction of relationships between the Commonwealth and the States.[4]

Nevertheless, in practice, the allocations of the Menzies Government were paid through the State Treasurers under Section 96, which states: 'During a period of ten years after the establishment of the Commonwealth and thereafter until the Parliament otherwise provides, the Parliament may grant financial assistance to any State on such terms and conditions as the Parliament thinks fit.' The interpretation in favour of assisting non-government school pupils was questioned in the High Court Case (1979-1981) because the grants gave 'no assistance to the State as a body politic but use it only as a conduit or agency by which the moneys are paid to the schools determined by the minister'.

While the constitutional question has 'open' features (for the High Court can never establish a hypothetical question as 'legal', but only determine positive action as 'legal' or 'illegal'), Prime Minister Menzies used Section 96 as the basis for two Federal measures in 1963:

* A Commonwealth Secondary Scholarship scheme, with award of an additional sum for students in independent schools as a contribution to fees.
* A plan whereby the building of science rooms and provision of equipment would be assisted in all schools on the basis of enrolment. The criterion for non-government schools was the absence of accommodation meeting defined standards. Ironically, such a proposal had been made, some months before, by the New South Wales State Conference of the ALP.[5]

## FEDERAL CAPITAL FUNDING

One might ask, 'Why did Menzies choose capital funding and the area of secondary school Science?'

First, the launching of Sputnik by the USSR in 1957 had created concern in both the USA and Australia. The Americans considered that there was an urgent need for improvement of school science education. In Australia, an industrial fund was created, and large corporations gave the equivalent of $600,000 to 61 schools of the Headmasters' Conference in a scheme which did not cover the other 658 non-Conference independent schools nor any State school.[6]

Secondly, various factors now created a favourable climate for Federal Government aid in the provision of science accommodation and equipment to schools:

* the need for national and defence development;
* the assistance was clearly to science teaching, not to religion;
* the fact that the aid would be granted only to schools which were below the accommodation 'standards' considered reasonable for their level of school population;

- the statement of the Headmasters' Conference that schools 'could accept capital grants (as distinct from regular subsidies towards running costs) from the Government without any prejudice to their independence';
- the fact that capital grants offered 'high political visibility', were acceptable to State Governments, consistent with the demands of educationalists - whether State or independent school oriented, were relatively inexpensive, and, most important, could be phased out - unlike recurrent grants.[7]

These were basic Liberal policies in the late 1960s, as is seen in the statements of the Ministers for Education, Gorton and Fraser.

Early in 1967, J.G.Gorton, Minister for Education, made it clear to the Library Association of Australia, and to an ACSSO - ATF delegation, that he did not wish to offer recurrent grants, e.g., for the training of school librarians.[8] J.M. Fraser, when Minister, stated: 'You can accurately assess a school's capital requirements. You cannot similarly assess the help it needs with running costs.'[9]

While the capital grants were a boon to Catholic secondary schools, those petitioning on their behalf in 1967 were more concerned with meeting the central need - recurrent grants for both secondary and primary schools.[10] The Headmasters' Conference (HMC) agreed to accept recurrent grants.[11]

In 1972, Prime Minister McMahon announced plans for increased recurrent assistance for non-government schools, 20% from the Federal Government and, hopefully, 20% from each State; also, for $215 m. as general capital assistance for both State and independent schools.[12]

It would be misleading to consider that the Commonwealth capital grants originated in submissions from the independent sector, Catholic or non-Catholic. They were primarily a response to the Australian Education Council, which included the six State Ministers of Education and the Commonwealth Minister for Education and Science.[13] On 26 May, 1972, the Council affirmed that 'the views expressed in the report of the (May, 1970) *Nationwide Survey of Educational Needs in Government Schools* are realistic and reflect a proper assessment of the position'.[14] The 'short-fall over a five-year period was estimated to be $1,443 m.'[15] In addition, representations were being made by teacher and parent organisations.

It had been claimed that the Commonwealth capital allocations favoured the non-government sector, which received more in proportion, and that they gave grants to schools which had 'so much science funds it's almost running out of their ears'.[16] However, the distribution recognised the fact that non-government schools received no science room / library capital funding from State budgets; no non-government school received a grant if its 'standards' met or exceeded those determined by the Commonwealth.

## VICTORIAN STATE FUNDING

The Federal electoral successes of Menzies in 1963 undoubtedly encouraged State Governments to introduce per capita grants for recurrent expenditure - Western Australia in 1964, and Victoria, but not until 1967.

A core of those ill-disposed to schools with a religious foundation were unreconciled to the aid, meagre as it was. In their eyes, payment for even a laboratory or a toilet block in a Catholic school was 'subsidising religion from public funds'; much more so, a per capita grant assisting a Catholic citizen to send his child to a school where religion was part of the curriculum.

The fact that a crisis of costs developed in the State school system enabled these people to raise the cry that the cause of the State's own schools was being sacrificed by politicians, and that the small aid to the independent system was robbing them of support to which they were entitled. As the far greater economic problems of the Catholic schools inspired large-scale efforts by laity as well as clergy in favour of more assistance, the Council for the Defence of Government Schools (DOGS) was formed to counter them.

The 'liberal' character of the Victorian Bolte government (1955-72) did not extend to a generous policy towards non-government schools. Mr Bolte and Mr Thompson, his able and dedicated Minister for Education (1967-1979), were men of integrity without prejudice. Yet, over the years, no State Government, Liberal or Labor - with perhaps the exception of Queensland and Western Australia in the 1960s - had been moved by anything more than political expediency. Sir Henry Bolte, despite considerable development of State school education, gave no assistance to non-government schooling until the time was opportune politically. Non-government school education does not rate a mention in Barry Muir's eulogy *Bolte from Bamganie*.

State Liberal policies had, in practice, a close parallel with Labor policy which had been written into statements of 1967, confirmed by the Party in 1969, 1971 and 1973. The 1969 'Platform, Constitution and Rules of the ALP' under the heading *Australian Schools Commission* stated: 'In making recommendations for such grants to the States, the Commission shall have regard to the primary obligation of governments to provide and maintain government school systems of the highest standard open to all children (and) the need to bring all schools up to acceptable standards.' *

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* Bessant and Spaull, p. 124; also, E.G. Whitlam (ref 14) and L. Murphy (CPD, The Senate, 1 December, 1971, p. 2252). During this period, Liberal policy was not very different. As Malcolm Fraser stated, when Minister for Education in August, 1969: 'We believe that governments should deal equitably with the problems of all school children and that, while the State must continue to make its own schools its primary responsibility, the independent schools are entitled to support also, provided they meet standards acceptable to the State.'

Mr Thompson, representing the Victorian State Liberal Party, spoke in similar terms:

> I believe that there are some positive advantages in retaining a dual system of education ... The Education Department has more than enough worries of its own without wanting to take over the education of the 25 per cent of Victorian school children who at the moment are not its direct or even indirect responsibility ... The primary responsibility of this State is towards the State system of education.[17]

This statement raises important issues as to the responsibility of the State to build up a free society. What is to be the character of this freedom? Apparently, the Minister who had the responsibility of ensuring equity in education did not see that he had such responsibility!

In 1966, the Parents' and Friends' Federation of Victoria had launched its claim for 'Education Equity' and, during the 1967 State Election campaign, DLP pressure induced the State Government to grant the first ever per capita grants to the parents of non-government school children in Victoria.

## THE AUSTRALIAN

In the 1960s, the writings of Graham Williams in *The Australian* and other material from guest feature writers considered 'State Aid' critically. In a series of articles in 1962, the sociologist S. Encel argued for a policy of Federal assistance to all schools on a basis of need, pointing out that this principle would help many Catholic schools. In 1969, he claimed that this could be done 'without conceding the Catholic claim that church schools have a "right" to assistance', which he did not accept. * Henry Schoenheimer wrote many columns in which he concentrated more on the professional aspects of education, with occasional reference to non-government school swimming pools; in Victoria, the government Melbourne High School had been one of the first to raise funds to acquire one! Schoenheimer did not fail to give some praise to 'invisible items like sacrifice and dedication, which can be found in greater or lesser amount in all schools, but show up most clearly under "salaries" in the balance sheets of Catholic ones'.[18] Like L.F. Neal,[19] he found a strong sense of community in Catholic schools.[20]

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* Encel, S.. 'Education and the Elector'. The Australian, 22 October, 1969. Encel's article showed no knowledge of the operation of tax concessions for which, he claimed, 'there is no counterpart in the public sector'. Parents with children at State schools have always been able to claim various expenses incurred in education. The only concession to non-government school parents was that the $400 limit (until 1974) allowed some margin for fees (about $250). In 1974, the deduction was reduced to $150, a sum which could be claimed reasonably for a secondary school pupil at a government school.

Besides publishing articles of different shades of view, *The Age* has taken a clear stand over the years, and its editorials and features deserve consideration as they reflect a view held by many.

In 1965, an editorial (22 April) saw schemes of aid as 'to some extent justified as expedients to meet current demands of the education system... The danger is that expediency may develop into a habit, generating more public money into the private educational system. No one can deny that parents have the right to send their children to private schools. But in a secularly constituted state such as Australia, they have no right to expect that other taxpayers will subsidise their refusal to use the schools provided by Governments... The duty of those who govern or aspire to govern is not to perpetuate, at the taxpayers' expense, any system of education that is cut off from the general community by particular beliefs, religious, social or otherwise.' [21]

A further editorial on 3 May, 1965 regarded the offer by the NSW Liberal Leader, Mr Askin, of 'direct aid' to Church schools as 'deplorable if such attempted political bribery of sectional interests were to become a regular feature of future election campaigns'. [22]

On 12 May, 1965, *The Age* editorial stated that, after 24 years of Labor Governments in NSW, Mr Askin had 'tied two powerful lures to his campaign fishing line. These were a dramatic policy for public transport and a modest but unequivocal promise of direct State aid for independent schools. The second lure landed him many Roman Catholic votes and ensured Democratic Labor Party preferences. Nothing Mr Askin said during the campaign suggested that principle rather than expediency inspired his State aid promise. He made a political point that the Deputy Leader of the Federal Opposition (Mr Whitlam), for one, seems eager to emulate.' [23]

The question of needs was further developed on 11 June, 1969: 'The case for some form of State aid to needy non-government schools and for a major increase in funds to Government schools is overwhelming... Aid should be distributed wherever the need is demonstrable and urgent'. [24]

Only in an article by feature writer, Bruce Grant, (20 June, 1969) was there any question of right: 'If the political parties are to respect the right of Catholics to a particular form of education, they must make this right exercisable in fact as well as in principle.' [25]

*Government school fees and fund raising*

An editorial of 2 August, 1971, stated, without any examination of the financing: 'The government provides the bare bones and it is left to parents and mothers' committees to flesh them out... The composite fees bring in $6 m. a year and mothers' committees raise $3 m.' *

On 11 October, 1971, an editorial expressed approval for the statement of Mr Fraser that funds would raise 'the standard of library provision in all secondary schools to acceptable levels'. *The Age* suggested that this application of the 'needs' principle 'could usefully extend to the whole sphere of education'. 26

### *Claude Forell*

Forell's first contribution on this topic appeared in *The Age* on 10 June, 1971, with articles on 25 May, 1972, and 16 August, 1973. 27

'There should be a clear separation of Church and State and the State ought not to support from public funds, institutions whose principal purpose is to instil particular religious beliefs ... it is a misuse of scarce resources to support a dual system of segregated State and parochial schools' (25 May, 1972). 'If the State were not in the business of providing education itself, and if it were left to all parents to organise and fund schools themselves, then the principle of equal provision (through tax rebates or grants) could be acceptable, subject to special provision for the disadvantaged child. But the State, quite democratically and legitimately has established schools ... When the State provides a common service - be it a national health scheme, public transport or school system - individual citizens are free to opt out and provide for themselves' (16 August, 1973).

These are new principles which, if carried to their logical conclusion, suggest that State activities, ratified by law, have priority over fundamental human rights - assuming that Mr Forell accepts the fact of inalienable rights, including the freedom of the press, which is provided for in the U.N. Declaration.

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* It is unfortunate that such statements about the financing of government schools (in an editorial !) pass without comment. One might also note 3.3 in the Karmel Committee's Report: 'Availability of equipment and facilities in the schools has in the past depended heavily on parental contributions.' The reality is that, in 1971, parent contributions in government schools were equal to 2.1 per cent of funding by Governments; see Mortensen (1977), p. 191, for detail. The Australian (29 October, 1975) cites fund raising in Australian State schools as $2.5 m., which would indicate an even lower percentage. Data on individual non-government schools suggests that fund-raising from parents and well-wishers is far more generous - even in 'low resource' schools, including those with 'needy' parents.

The only comprehensive treatment of Victorian State school fees ('composite', 'subject', 'text books and stationery', etc.) is some fifteen years old (O'Neill and Paterson, 1968). It covered (p. 19) 'six secondary schools which were known to serve families at the lower end of the income scale'. No attention was paid to non-government schools, but a significant statement, p. 54, referred to Education Department maintenance and requisite allowances to students from low-income families being available to children in departmental schools only.

## THE SOCIAL AND POLITICAL CLIMATE

In 1937, G.V. Portus had written: 'In my judgment it will take nothing short of a religious revolution to alter the minds of Australians on this question.' [28] The thesis is plausible. In the 1930s, the employment of Catholics in the private sector was restricted, while Protestants were suspicious of growth of 'Catholic' employment in the public service. There was separation along denominational lines of scholars associated with scriptural or theological studies. With the exception of the great Anglican headmaster, James Darling of Geelong Grammar School, Victoria, Protestant educationalists did not, until the 1960s, support Government aid for schools, because Catholics would have been the greatest beneficiaries. On the other hand, the writer found no personal prejudice in employment in Munitions, Army and Defence, during the late 1930s and 1940s. There were also close friendships between Catholic and non-Catholic families in the suburbs.

The present situation is different. Employment is determined more professionally; scholars are associated in joint schools of theology; ecumenism flourishes. However, those who speak of a fundamental religious revolution, in which differences have been eliminated, under-estimate strong and divergent views in the community. The hostility of lobbies opposed to non-government schools is supplemented by divisions in the non-government school community itself. The Catholic once saw the non-Catholic as lukewarm to his 'need'. Now, the non-Catholic sees the Catholic community, particularly some in the bureaucracies, as unsympathetic to the position of parents with children at high recurrent resource - offensively labelled 'wealthy' schools, or, by Graham Williams, 'poor little rich schools'. [29]

However, the social, economic and educational circumstances which led to the Labor Government establishing the Schools Commission Interim Committee in December, 1972, can legitimately be called a revolution. It was brought about by Gough Whitlam, who merited the title of *Leader* by his clear but, as circumstances showed, somewhat flexible thinking. He had a concept of equity and social justice, no religious prejudices and, it must be admitted, a pragmatism and feel for political realities. No one saw more clearly than he that Labor could never win power without the 'Catholic Vote'.

## ALP POLICIES

Powerful forces in the ALP executive were irrevocably opposed to assistance. When, at the ALP Federal Conference, 1971, a move supported by I. Cathie and W.H. Hartley of Victoria was made to phase out 'State aid' on the basis of need, D. Dunstan, Premier of South Australia, said that these attacks 'bedevilled' him and, if successful, would lead to the defeat of State Labor Governments. [30]

Hartley's influence in this matter had been a constant embarrassment to the Labor Party, particularly in the State Election of 1970 [31] and in his being a signatory to the High Court Challenge.

Intra-ALP struggles were centered on whether State-aid could be given and, if so, to the scholar or to the school, to all children or to the 'needy' alone. The most significant battles in the Federal Executive were fought out in 1966, and E.G. Whitlam, whose leadership of the Party was at stake, was instrumental in getting the numbers for the principle of assistance on a 'needs' basis, supplementing existing benefits. His broad view of the use of Section 96 grants for 'assault on educational underprivilege' made it easier for those members of the party who opposed religious education to accept and support the new platform. [32] Don Smart has proffered the opinion that the policy of State departments, the Australian Education Council, the Australian Teachers' Federation (ATF), and the Australian Council of State School Organisations (ACSSO) in demanding federal aid to their own 'needy' schools was 'fatal to their aim of frustrating aid to independent schools'.[33]

## THE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY

The Catholic bishops and laity then working for educational funding recognised that a 'needs' policy would lead to anomalies and tensions. However, there was a dilemma. If the Federal ALP got into power, the Catholic authorities would be placed in an embarrassing position if they then accepted grants on grounds they had already objected to in principle. A speech of Archbishop James Carroll, Chairman of the Federal and NSW Catholic Schools Committees, at the blessing and opening of a library block at St Augustine's College, Brookvale, had a significant effect in suggesting to Catholics voting in the December, 1972 election that ALP policies based on 'need' were consistent with the principles of justice in education, as explained by the Catholic hierarchy and laity. He stated:

> That the two political groupings disagree as to methods of distribution or application of subsidies is relatively unimportant and secondary, as against the established fact that both accept the principle of public support for the voluntary effort of independent schools. Sound principles of social philosophy are invoked to support, for example, in the area of recurrent costs, grants 'across the board', or, 'grants according to needs'. The matter of vital importance is that by democratic processes both groupings have adopted the basic principle ... [34]

Eric Walsh, a Catholic and political consultant to the ALP election team, played a vital role in giving this statement publicity and stressing its value to the Party. Most consider that it played an important part in Labor's electoral victory in December, 1972. As *The Age*, Melbourne, said in its editorial of 20 November,1972:

> In Labor circles the statement was received ... with joy. For what it did in effect was to give a clearance to the Labor Party's 'needs' policy - a policy which other NSW bishops junior to Archbishop Carroll had previously attacked, and on which other members of the Catholic hierarchy have had strong reservations. No longer can the Liberal Party base its appeal to Catholic voters on the grounds that it is *the* State aid party. Archbishop Carroll, unwittingly perhaps, has pulled the rug from under them. In the process he has also set the various Catholic lay organisations involved in education arguing among themselves. [35]

It was not only the 'Catholic lay organisations' that argued and were confused. When Archbishop Freeman of Sydney was asked for comment on the statement of his auxiliary, he referred to the motion proposed by the Federal Catholic Schools Committee and passed by the Episcopal Conference of 1969. This motion referred to per capita grants only. A spokesman for Freeman said that Carroll had made his comments 'as a private individual'. *

No other Australian bishop gave support to Archbishop Carroll's opinion. In Goulburn, Brian Keating, a member of both the Federal and NSW Catholic Schools' Committees, accused him of confusing parents and jeopardising the integrity of the Federal Catholic Schools Committee. The Australian Parents Council criticised the statement strongly. One exception was Monica Turner, secretary of the Catholic Parents' and Friends' Associations in Sydney. She said that their policy was not 'restrictive to any particular form of payment' and that Archbishop Carroll was 'simply being realistic'. *

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* The statements of Archbishop Freeman and Mrs Turner were reported by Ian Carroll in 'Aid for schools sparks row in Catholic Church', The Age, 15 November, 1972. Mrs Turner's view was consistent with an earlier comment (The Advocate, 2 December, 1971) that her Federation 'did not favor one party's policy in preference to another'. 'After the storm, Karmel twirls into focus' (The Catholic Weekly, 8 November, 1973) gives the Federation's appreciation of the Report of the Interim Committee. G. Williams (The Australian, 'Attacks on Beazley split parent group', 17 November, 1973) stated that the Federation was not reaffiliating with the APC because of 'intemperate remarks made about Mr Beazley and the Karmel Report'. Mrs Turner took a stronger stance in 1983 and criticised erosions of the 'basic grant' by the Labor Government.

The Catholic Bishops declared their official position on 30 May, 1973. They cited principles: aid should not 'involve unequal treatment in respect of different children in the independent system'; while special grants should be provided 'for schools in poorer suburbs or for otherwise disadvantaged children', these should be 'in a separate category'; the Episcopal Commission was 'unequivocally in favour of the per capita system' and, concerned for the separation of Church and State, opposed 'the system of lump payments'.

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## TERMS OF REFERENCE

Soon after the election of Labor to Federal office, the new Prime Minister, the Right Honourable E.G. Whitlam, set up an Interim Committee for the Australian Schools Commission, with Professor Peter Karmel as Chairman. It has been stated that the terms of reference were drafted by K.N. Jones, soon to become permanent head of the Commonwealth Department of Education.[1]

First, the Committee was charged 'to examine the position of both government and non-government primary and secondary schools' without reference to the ALP 1969 Conference proviso of 'primary obligation' to government systems.[2] Whitlam spoke of 'equality of opportunity' and emphasised that, under a Labor Government, grants would be made on a basis of needs. Yet he neither defined what he meant by needs and equality of opportunity, nor how they would be estimated.[3] Nor did the terms of reference offer directive or guidance. In connection with curricula, they made a passing comment on 'aptitudes and interests of students', but nowhere use the phrase 'needs of students' found in the 1969 Conference motion.[4] As one member of the Committee (A.W. Jones) put it: 'The needs philosophy was dictated to the Committee, but it was the Committee's task to relate this to educational values.'[5]

## SOME GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

The Committee did much work in a short time. Mrs Jean Blackburn, Deputy Chairman, noted: 'Academics in the field of education, perhaps overcome by the general uncertainty of the educational times, made few representations to the Interim Committee.'[6] Its report was released, and tabled in Parliament after little warning, in May, 1973.[7]

On 13 June, by which date very few copies had been seen by members of the educational profession, let alone by the general public, came the announcement that the government would accept all the Committee's recommendations except two. The schools did not receive official copies of the Report until late July; on 7 August, the category of each non-systemic school was published.

The Karmel Committee's additional allocation to government schools over a two year period was $396.5 m. ; and $460 m. when existing programs were included. When considered on this basis, grants to non-government schools were $50.2 m. and $179.3 m. respectively. When including 'programs', the grand total was $660.1 m. Mr Fraser had stated that the Labor Party's education policies would cost an extra $546 m. and that this would mean 'a 15 per cent rise in income tax and a rise in company tax by a third'.[8] Irrespective of the validity of his figures, he was not in a position to see that the revenue would come, in part at least, from inflation moving taxpayers into higher tax categories.

A general interpretation of the Whitlam era is not the purpose of this monograph. However, it is relevant to quote a review of *The Leader* (James Walter) by W.F. Broderick, who presented Whitlam in these terms:

> Here at last after a generation spent in the Ice Age of mediocrity was a new type of man, optimistic, articulate, presentable and with the vision splendid...We were all behind him: the academics, the Labor stalwarts, the new women, the young, the Aborigines, the dreamers. [9]

Nicholas Whitlam later described his father:

> Anyone who knows him realises he has a saintly quality. He's obviously a bastard in all sorts of ways; how else could he have succeeded? But the fundamentals of sainthood are all there - absolute incorruptibility, the way he worked...It was as if he was doing it for posterity. Nobody's ever going to say he didn't do the decent thing.[10]

Were those who refused to accept Gough Whitlam as their Leader, unconditionally, lacking in compassion? Was it a sin to be suspicious and worried about the cost-effectiveness of the grand plans and 'jobs for the boys' in a pseudo-Camelot. Creighton Burns wrote in *The Age:* 'It is an attitude which, understandably, has made some of the old Labor professionals fume with frustration and denounce the "amateurs". who, they allege, have moved in on the party since it rose to power.' [11]

## TOO MUCH: TOO QUICKLY

Two days after Labor came into power, an *Age* editorial stated: 'Labor's objective - equality of educational opportunity for all school-children in the Commonwealth is a worthy one. But it is not an objective that can be attained overnight. Labor's whirlwind approach to Government should be reserved for simpler matters.' [12] Almost two years later, when the Karmel Report had been implemented for nine months, the editorial stated that most Victorians 'would welcome more positive indications that the enormous outlay is enhancing the quality of education and not mainly the prosperity of the teaching profession'.[13] Education is a labor-intensive activity, and teachers' salaries are very relevant to costs.

Burns had referred to 'too much, too quickly' and, in 1974, Barry Hill feared that 'across the country so much is happening that the danger is that fires have been lit too quickly'. [14] The comments were not specific to Education, but could easily be applied there. The States, Victoria in particular, despite some anticipatory planning, found great difficulty in expending the building grants and, even, in distributing funds to disadvantaged schools and schools for the handicapped. [15]

These failures were associated with complaints from the Victorian State Minister of Education, the Hon L.H.S. Thompson:

> We will need an auditor to check every brick as it is laid if this goes ahead. [16]
>
> I am not unhappy with the Schools Commission, but I've consistently argued for greater flexibility in the expenditure of Commonwealth funds. [17]

In 1974, Mr Beazley was most critical of Victoria which, he alleged, was alone among the States in refusing to supply information. [18]

One justified complaint was the inadequacy of copies of the Interim Report. 'Members of the State Department's task force (Victoria) on disadvantaged schools...have not received a copy or been given a photocopy of Chapter 9 which defines their brief.'[19] The non-government schools which were being categorised and, in some instances, re-categorised after appeal, had the same problem; and the Report itself contained no details of the recurrent resources included in calculation of the 'Karmel Index'. [20]

The most comprehensive paper on the impact of the 'Karmel' Report on Education, within the economic environment of 1974, was that of Chris Selby-Smith. His concluding paragraph stated:

> Overall, the programs appear to have slightly compounded the difficulties of economic management, to be open to more serious objections on efficiency grounds and to have both advantages and disadvantages in terms of equity. Even if there are net equity advantages it is far from obvious that they are sufficient to justify expenditure of $350-400 m. per annum in terms of the alternatives foregone. [21]

Selby-Smith did not wish 'the unwary reader to believe that the author was, on balance, substantially critical of the overall program'. He stated: 'This is not so: the vision and energy of Professor Karmel and his Committee have laid the basis for substantial improvements in Australian schools.' [22] Inflation, exacerbated but not caused by the Karmel measures alone, had a significant effect in reducing its impact. Evidence as to the escalation of building costs is provided in a companion paper (Mortensen) to that of Selby-Smith. [23]

Henry Schoenheimer, an astute and compassionate observer, noted:

> Behind strictly 'educational' policy, and overlapping it, stands social policy. Beyond an uncertain point, another $100 or $200 or $300 a year can far more effectively promote the 'educational' development of a child if it is spent in the home by his parents than if it is fed into the schools by bureaucrats and expended by professionals. [24]

A similar point was also recognised by Professor Karmel in his *Report of the Committee of Enquiry into Education in South Australia 1969-70*. He quoted, with approval, the conclusion of a working party of the Schools' Council of Great Britain :

> The most decisive factor is not the material home background, not the neighbourhood, not the kind of school the child attends - important as they are. It is the attitude of the parents to education, their interest and support of the child in co-operation with the school which matter most. Compensatory education will always be a poor second to good housing, and the elimination of poverty and (above all) to the security and affection in the home.[25]

## CATEGORISATION AND PHASING-OUT

When nominating members to the Committee, the Minister for Education, the Hon Kim E. Beazley chose persons who were ' middle of the road' academics or government / non-government school executives. He omitted those who were hostile to the Catholic cause, parents who opposed the principle of 'State Aid' or who appeared to emphasise 'across the board' per pupil grants; also, teacher organisations who might argue for government schools and sectional interests only. [26]

Non-government secondary (non-systemic) schools were divided into eight categories - A to H. The Committee recommended (6.50) that, by 1976, Category A schools with 'a volume of resources that well exceeds the 1979 targets' should have grants for recurrent costs 'phased-out'. Schoenheimer wrote: 'A few schools that had been unwise enough to prefer extra human resources to more bricks and mortar suffered because a detailed index incorporating a full spectrum of criteria would have taken too long to prepare and apply. [27] Senator McManus drew attention to 'a small orthodox Jewish school in NSW which functions with difficulty on a co-operative basis, aided by teachers who accept low salaries from a spirit of dedication'. [28]

There were other anomalies,e.g., an old-established boarding school in a country town, losing money, with a declining enrolment. A new headmaster in 1972 did not wish to dismiss staff arbitrarily and, as a result, the school was placed in 'Category A'. Other schools, with a high standard of facilities and low pupil to staff ratios, had to service large building debts.The Interim Committee seemed to think that it was possible to isolate recurrent expenses from capital costs and debt. On the other hand, schools, with science laboratories funded by the Commonwealth Government, with grants for building of libraries, were placed in Category H - because of high pupil to staff ratios.

The Committee not only recommended 'phasing-out' Category A schools by 1 January, 1976; it also reduced grants (1974) for Category B and C schools, and D (Secondary), below the grants for 1973.[29]

Cabinet went further. It decided to phase-out grants for Category A and B schools as from 1 January, 1974. According to Michelle Grattan, the initiative was taken by Senator Murphy, 'a long standing hard-liner against State aid...once Senator Murphy questioned how to justify giving Federal money to the "silvertail" private schools for another two years, he got clear support'. [30]

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# 3 Promises in 1972: Futures in 1975

## TWO ISSUES

This chapter considers two important issues. First, what were the promises of the Federal Labor Party prior to the election of December, 1972, particularly with regard to retention of the basic per capita grant at the levels then current? Did new circumstances after the election, e.g., recognition of 'massive' sums of money needed, justify a change in policy? Secondly, what were the long term implications of the Schools Commission recommendation in June 1975, for 'supported schools', a proposal greeted so enthusiastically by the Australian Council of State School Organisations (ACCSO) and, in Victoria, by the Victorian Council of State School Organisations (VICCSO)?

## POLICIES AND PERSONALITIES

To understand the Victorian State Labor party policies during the 1960s and to the present day, one would have to explore:

* the philosophical principles that divided men like the Labor Federal member for Eden-Monaro, NSW, Allan Fraser (who saw State Aid as a right), and Senator Murphy (who denied this principle categorically). For the latter, as amply demonstrated by the proposed Bill of Human Rights (1974) drafted with the help of Gareth Evans, there was no right, just 'liberty'. Needless to say, to grant mere liberty to a person to obtain a job, to found a family and to educate his children is a principle of 'laissez-faire' liberalism. In practice, liberty, without right, means that the poor (and others of moderate income) may seek these ends; they may send their children to a school of their choice, but may not claim support unless they attend a school under direct government jurisdiction. Recognition of a right implies reasonable and equitable assistance in its exercise. [1]

* the arguments between the Labor Party lawyers who regarded State Aid as constitutional or unconstitutional. Senator Murphy later, as Mr Justice Murphy of the High Court, was the one judge to support the "DOGS case' and to declare, in his minority view, the use of Section 116 an unconstitutional means of funding non-government schools. [2]

* the differences between the pragmatists who considered State Aid an election winner or election loser. I have already considered the availability of State Aid as 'a revolution', and it is to be noted that, as late as August, 1983, an *Age* editorial was declaring: 'It has been a remarkable revolution, reflecting a rise in political opportunism as well as a decline in bitter sectarianism of the past.' The thesis of political opportunism was not novel even in 1973. [3] As will be shown, it was clearly stated by B.A. Santamaria and supported, in another camp, by *The Age's* able columnist, Claude Forell.

- the evidence for 'a decline in bitter sectarianism'. Comradeship in two wars has done something to reduce this unfortunate feature of Australian life.
- There has been distrust within the non-government school community during the post Karmel era, but it has been associated with courtesy, a growing understanding of mutual difficulties, an appreciation of the need for a common goal, and, in many instances, personal respect and friendship.
- the powerful lobby, mounted, during the 1970s and beyond, by State school parent organisations, the DOGS in which they were well represented, and the teacher unions. This lobby has combined 'sectarian bitterness' and vested interests thought to be under attack. With the parents, it was concern for loss of their traditional share of the cake; with teachers, particularly in the last five years, an additional element has been the loss of job opportunities in government schools. The teachers have been more active politically in recent years. They have the money for extensive media advertising and for support of political parties at election time.

## LABOR PARTY PRINCIPLES

Geoffrey Barker has stated that 'it is important to appreciate that the revised State Government grants to non-Government schools do not imply an attack on the principle of State aid to independent schools'.[4] Unfortunately, the statement is incorrect. Labor's policy, in Victoria particularly, has never admitted that parents in non-government schools have a right in principle to a grant for the education of their children. Its policies have always been consistent, as has the emphasis in the editorials of *The Age* which has seen schemes of aid 'to some extent justified as expedients to meet current demands of the education system'.[5]

The word expedient is appropriate, as anyone familiar with the State election of 1970 well knows. Mr Holding, then Labor Leader, omitted from his policy speech a critical sentence in the official platform: 'The board shall apply an ultimate policy of reduction and phasing out of grants to the private sector, as the Government system develops the capacity to absorb children from the private system without prejudice to their educational development.'[6] Mr Holding later stated that a Labor Government in Victoria would phase out State aid, but that it was 'a long-term concept'.[7]

Catholic thinkers are beginning to rediscover the principle that the exclusion of some parents, suddenly or gradually, from reasonable, established, basic grant levels, is the denial of right for all. Dr G. Pell, Chairman for the Catholic Education Board of the Ballarat diocese, said recently: 'If needs are to be the only basis for funding, needs can be defined arbitrarily and in many ways. Needs can be defined out of existence. The State Board has begun that process.'[8]

These points were developed in my article 'Implications for Catholic Schools in Karmel Report' (*The Advocate*, 30 August, 1973). It stated:

> I believe that Labor leaders have two main components determining their policy and actions:
>
> Educational 'justice' and a 'unified society' fostered, through education, within the framework of a developing Socialism. With this is combined the powerful influence of teachers' federations and the humanist Left which oppose non-government schooling on ideological grounds. This leads both groups to deny, in principle, rights of the private sector and the parent in education.
>
> 'Charity', a genuine sense of compassion for the poor which is associated with hostility to an ill-defined class, considered to be the cause of their impoverishment. It is this component which has led to and justified the stress on the plight of Catholic parish primary schools. [9]

The latter element motivated some, at least, of the members of the State Labor Party's Education sub-committee (of which Clyde Holding was Chairman) in its publication (1964) *Looking to the Future* . [10] However, there is a problem where there are no sound principles of justice, right, and equity. There is a danger of envy for high resource schools (where parents choose to spend their money on their children's education rather than on other goods) and of a desire to control schools for the poor.

There has been a slow development of the latter idea, from the concept of 'supported schools' ( *Report for the Triennium 1976-78*), non-government 'community schools' (proposed at the Australian Teachers' Federation Annual Council, 1979), and recent suggestions for 'integration'.

The intentions of those opposed to non-government schooling are increasingly evident; they have not changed, but are just taking a different direction, i.e., towards control as a condition of funding.

## THE RIGHT HON E.G. WHITLAM
(Leader of the Opposition, 1972; Prime Minister of Australia, 1973-75)

Before the 1972 election, Allan Barnes, an astute political commentator, reported that 'several members of Mr Whitlam's parliamentary executive wanted him to make a declaration that, under a Labor Government, "wealthy" schools would receive no aid'. Barnes commented: 'But Mr Whitlam's supporters believe he will make no such negative statement.' [11]

In fact, he had already made an unequivocal statement to a large meeting in Festival Hall, Melbourne, on 2 May, 1972: 'We will not repeal or reduce any educational benefit which is already being paid. We will confirm any which are there already...' [12]

On 20 June, 1972, in an address to the Catholic Luncheon Club in Melbourne, he stated that the ALP 'will support any forms of benefit already existing'.[13]

Similar promises were made to the Annual Conference of the Australian Parents' Council ('The ALP would not reduce or remove any existing benefit') and to a delegation from this Council (July, 1972).[14] The promise was not withdrawn in his Policy Speech (13 November, 1972) for the 1972 December election.[15]

Mr Whitlam, when occupying the portfolio of Minister for Education wrote on 12 December, 1972, to all Premiers and in similar terms on 13 December to Mr J. Dixon, the chairman of the National Council of Independent Schools. The Prime Minister stated: 'Per capita grants to non-government schools for the year 1973 will be paid at the rates already approved for 1973, i.e., $62 for primary pupil and $104 for secondary pupil... Commencing in 1974 additional Commonwealth contributions towards the running costs of non-government schools will be determined on the basis of relative need...'[16]

The dilemma of Mr Whitlam was, of course, obvious. As Allan Barnes reported: 'The Labor Party's parliamentary executive yesterday insisted that their leader (Mr Whitlam) make clear before this year's election that a Labor Government would eliminate Federal subsidies to so-called "wealthy" schools. At a private meeting, several members of the executive are understood to have declared that Labor should not go to the polls under "false colours" on its policy that education aid should be on a needs basis... Mr Whitlam conceded the argument of a majority of executive members'.[17] Yet, it might be added that, prior to the election, he made no public statement that offered clarification.

Mr Whitlam later (5 December, 1973) said that his Government was not committed to ensuring that no school would receive less aid. He told Parliament that the promise referred to legislation, the *States Grants (Schools) Act, 1972*, which had since been repealed.[18]

Mr Snedden, then Leader of the Opposition, commented:

> 'It was a clear promise and a promise on which people relied. There is no doubt that what is happening here is an attempt to deceive people. This is a simple question of honor and dishonor.'[19]

While I consider that the Prime Minister backed out on a clear electoral promise to retain existing benefits for all pupils, I cannot agree with Paul Kelly that 'it can be seen in retrospect that Gough Whitlam's needs concept in education was essentially a political device...'[20] The same type of analysis led Michelle Grattan to describe the excellent capital funding of 'science laboratories in government and private schools' as 'an election gimmick'.[21] Both ventures were politically opportune, but seen to be in the national interest.

Gough Whitlam has been described as a great man, a man of vision. He certainly meant well in his education planning and was free from bigotry and envy, and from the determination to deny religious institutions a place in the educational life and schooling of young Australians. One might recall his reply to an *Age* editorial, 'Dangerous Harvest' (11 June, 1968), which called 'for an immediate reply, lest it encourages the very sectarianism and obscurantism it professedly deplores'. [22] Mr Whitlam stated: 'It is divisive and destructive of our educational opportunities as individuals and as a nation if the State and Catholic systems appear to be in conflict. The pupils of both systems will be the sufferers in the event of such a conflict. It enriches and consolidates the educational opportunities of us all if the two systems understand each other and work together.' [23]

Why was it that, in mid 1973, the Prime Minister did not fight on the issue of 'support for all' - at a time when his authority was most respected? He was too astute a thinker not to see that an important principle was at stake. However, while he had the support of his Minister of Education, he had opposition from the powerful Left in Cabinet and in Caucus. * The State Aid issue had already led to his resignation in 1968 and to no more than a narrow win over Cairns for the position of Party Leader. In 1973, Cairns' star was still waxing, and Whitlam knew that, if he offered any defence for Category A schools in Caucus, he might undermine a marginal power base. [24]

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* Among them, one could number Senators Murphy, James and Douglas McClelland, Dr Jim Cairns and Mr Gordon Bryant; ALP members Left of Centre might be added. Cairns maintained that Socialists could not support aid for Catholic schools which were hostile to 'Socialism'; see his 'Socialism and State Aid' in Dissent (Melbourne), September/October, 1962.)

Only those who recognise the strength of these personalities and their successors in the Labor Caucus of today (both Federal and Victorian State) can understand the significance of William McMahon's statement of November, 1972: 'Labor's so called 'needs test' on independent schools...clearly shows the intention of powerful sections of the Labor Party to abolish State Aid altogether.' Some Catholic officials have been slow to see reductions of funding for non-Catholic schools as an eventual threat to their own support, independence and autonomy.

Bryant (The Age, 2 June, 1972) considered that independent schools were 'dependent'/'mendicant': 'Since the inception of the present "State Aid" scheme nine years ago, I have objected strongly, not on grounds of support of religion or aid to the privileged few, but on the simple proposition that public funds should be accounted for publicly and directly.' In a paper with J. Wood ('Labor and Education', Victorian Branch of the ALP, 1966), he argued that independent schools were socially divisive, and that their support by State Aid encouraged educational privilege. It was claimed that 'State Aid' was inconsistent with the ALP's socialist objectives. See, also, A.D. Spaull's 'Educational Policies of Australian Political Parties' in Jecks (ed), pp. 99-102.

## THE HON K.E. BEAZLEY
(Shadow Minister for Education, 1972, and Minister, 1973-75)

During 'The Great Debate on Education', conducted by the Australian Broadcasting Commission, on 4 April, 1972, Mr Beazley stated: 'I don't know what my promises are, at the moment, that I'm supposed to live up to.' [25]

It seems certain that Beazley given freedom of action in 1973, would have accepted the Karmel Report and left the phasing out to a later day. As he wrote in 1980: 'I always told Professor Karmel that I believed the Commonwealth should have a stake in the education of every child; and I, therefore, did not agree with the phasing out.' [26] After the release of the Report, he expressed himself emphatically in an 'explanation' to the House of Representatives: 'My view was that every school in the country, including Geelong Grammar School, should receive a basic grant from the Commonwealth and that the Commonwealth should have an identity with the education of every child.' [27]

Michelle Grattan, in referring to the Cabinet discussions states that Mr Beazley 'favored making no cut at all in the level of aid wealthy schools would get over the next two years'. [28] This was also the interpretation of the DLP Senator F.P. McManus: 'I believe Mr Beazley wanted to carry out his promise but was overruled.' [29]

The tragedy (if one values harmony and understanding) and irony of his position was that the Minister had more in common with his nominal opponents - Catholic bishops, non-Catholic school headmasters and the Opposition in Parliament - than with Mr Whitlam or Senator Murphy. His argument with Senator Murphy, which originated in a complete difference in principle, has never been voiced openly. He seemed to be less disturbed by the consistency of the Senator, whose objection to all forms of State Aid has never been in doubt, than by the failure of Mr Whitlam to honour personal 'undertakings' on behalf of the Government.[30]

Mr Beazley never minced words. In 1980, he referred to 'the charge that Whitlam had promised no one would get less than the 1972 levels of grant, which became in practice an argument for the 1973 levels of grant. I personally believed that in 1972 he did make this promise, but this encountered a furious reaction from him that I "was not the keeper of his conscience". ' [31] Previously in 1977, Mr Beazley had stated: 'The alleged meaning of the Prime Minister's alleged undertaking varied according to whether it was held he was referring to 1972 level grants ($50 per primary pupil and $68 per secondary pupil) or 1973 level grants (respectively $62 and $104)...' [32]

The suggestion that Mr Whitlam was referring to 1972 (rather than 1973) grants flies in the face of all the evidence cited above, including Mr Beazley's own statements on other occasions.

It must also be admitted that the Minister for Education, so adamant and clear as to the principle, had problems himself in deciding the value of an equitable basic grant, which was the key issue. [33] In defending his solidarity with Cabinet, and in claiming that he had not pledged that the per capita grants would continue after Labor had won office, Mr Beazley appealed to the Hansard record of 26 September, 1972, where he had given 'fair warning [that] the appropriation will be reapportioned on the basis of need'. [34] 'There was no commitment at all to continue the 20 per cent', he said. [35]

On 10 January, 1973, in the early days of his ministry, he gave a delegation from the Australian Parents Council a copy of Mr Whitlam's letter to Mr J. Dixon of NCIS, and stated that, in his clear interpretation, this meant the retention of the 1973 per capita grants as a minimum. [36] Mr Beazley himself had offered the same guarantee before the election when, on 27 October, 1972, he said at Haberfield, NSW: 'Whispering campaigns to the contrary, no private school will get less than the per capita grants it gets now.' [37]

On the other hand, on 13 April, 1973, he wrote to Professor Karmel in these terms:

> We wish the Interim Committee to make recommendations for contributions towards recurrent expenditure in non-government schools for 1974 and 1975 on the basis of its assessment of needs and priorities... The effect of this decision is that the Government will not pre-determine a basic level of support for all non-government schools after 1973. It will be for the Interim Committee to recommend the nature and level of support for recurrent expenditure in those schools during 1974 and 1975, having regard to the overall assessment of needs and priorities and to the pre-existing situation. [38]

When the final 'adjustments' were being made in the heat of political debate, Mr L.F. Bowen negotiated for the Labor Party. Mr Beazley has stated (1980): 'I believe it was fortunate for the cause of the Schools Commission and the new funding that I became ill and that Lionel Bowen became Acting Minister.' [39]

The 'agreement' provided that Level A and B primary school pupil grants for both 1974 and 1975 were below 1973 - in money (current) terms. However, Level A, B, and C secondary grants for both years were less than the 1973 figures! In considering advantages (or disadvantages) for pupils in other categories, one has to carefully consider indexation (supplementation) for inflation, alterations in a basis for calculating State grants, and changes in concessional taxation deductions for education expenses. The position of the 'school-parent partnership' can then be seen in a more balanced light. [40]

## SUPPORTED SCHOOLS

The Schools Commission Report for the Triennium 1976-78 stated: 'The Commission is aware that many non-government schools have, as their basic reason for existence, a particular view of education and of life. Parents are often attracted to enrol their children in such schools because of that identity... Thus the general conditions of subsidy impose no obligations which diminish the integrity of that identity (13.73). [41]

This was not their view in treatment of 'low fee, low standard [did they mean low resource?] schools' which 'may not be able to reach acceptable standards without additional assistance and yet it is not possible for their supporters to increase markedly the assistance provided to them' (13.76). The Commission recommended that this class of school should receive higher funding if it was prepared to be placed in a new category: that of *Supported School*. Certain limitations on the operation of the school were proposed: open entry 'within conditions approved by the Commission' and a minority of public nominees on the governing body of the school (13.77). The Commission's *Summary* of the Report stated: 'Whilst there can be no guarantee that the orientation of schools which choose Supported status will be entirely preserved under conditions of open entry, the composition of the school's governing body will help to ensure this...'[42]

The Australian Parents' Council unanimously rejected the concept at its Annual Conference (15-17 August, 1975): 'The A.P.C. does not accept the proposal of "supported schools" because it effectively denies freedom of choice on non-government schools to those parents most vulnerable - the low-income group.' [43] In July, 1976, the Schools Commission proposed 'to begin a scheme of supported schools in 1977'; the recommendation for a 'pilot scheme' was not accepted by the Fraser Government. [44]

The Australian Council of State Schools Organisations was particularly interested in this proposal. As Mrs. Joan Kirner, its President and also a full-time member of the Schools Commission, stated: 'This recommendation to fund needy non-government schools up to 90 per cent of their recurrent needs on condition of their acceptance of certain conditions of public openness and accountability could be a turning point in the history of State Aid... There can be no question of public funds for private schools at this level without public conditions.' [45] In line with this statement, Mrs Ruth Hoadley, President of the Victorian Council of State School Organisations, stated: 'It will be up to us to see that such conditions are insisted upon!. [46]

Father Martin signed the 1975 Commission Reports for the Triennia 1976-78 and 1977-79 relating to *Supported Schools*. [47] However he stated that he would discourage Victorian Catholic schools from seeking this status [48] ; also, that he realised 'there are difficult legal implications that have to be watched, but in many thinly populated country areas the only hope of survival is supported schools'.[49] He referred specifically to areas of Western Australia and Queensland, and some parts of New South Wales.

It is relevant to note that the Federal Liberal and National (Country) Parties made a joint statement in October, 1975 on the Schools Commission's proposals for 'supported' schools. It stated:

> We believe difficulties could occur with respect to the general right of access and lack of control over enrolment of students by school authorities if government representatives were to be appointed to school boards. For these reasons we would not require the appointment of government representatives to school boards. We would not impose any conditions upon grants to schools which would diminish their independence or destroy their essential character. Where it was shown government intervention had weakened the independence of schools, our efforts upon return to government would be directed towards restoring independence.[50]

## SUMMING UP

Two points may be made. First, one cannot separate the principle of funding all children and the practice, the value of the minimum grant. For example, it is a farce to claim adherence to the principle and to offer some a pittance. To 'phase out', as the Karmel Committee recommended in 1973 and as Labor Governments apparently plan in 1983, is to deny the principle, to deny any right to sharing in public funds.

Secondly, sections 13.66 to 13.72 of the Schools Commission Report for the Triennium 1976-78 note that the Interim Committee recognised 'the right of parents to choose' high resource schooling for their children, but it did not support 'the right to public assistance to facilitate that choice'. The Commission considered that the subsequent controversy had 'the unfortunate effect of deflecting public attention from the more significant educational changes, affecting much larger groups of children'. 'It has noted also the claim that there is a right to public assistance irrespective of the resource level at which the school is operating. It sees an inherent conflict between this claim and the principle that the funds available for education should be distributed according to need.' In recommending 'subsidies' for high resource schools, the Commission wished 'to place on record that it has done so without the implication that it has accepted the principle ...'[51]

There are dangers in adopting the utilitarian principle of 'the greatest good of the greatest number', a phrase which presents logical problems and, in this application, neglects many issues, e.g.:

- equity in allocating support to parents of similar income with children in schools of identical structure and operating costs.
- equity between parents of similar income with small or large families, particularly where there is differentiation into one - and two - income or single parent families.
- the violation of the right of a person to use disposable income in any proper and legal way, e.g., on the education of children rather than personal luxuries, car styles, and beach houses. There is penalty for paying fees to non-profit organisations to enable 'above standard' resources, but no penalty for expenditure on personal tuition or interstate/overseas trips for a student.
- constant references in s. 13 (2) and (4) of the Schools Commission Act 1973 (no. 213) emphasise the word 'need'. The weakness of 'the principle' is the vagueness surrounding the word 'funds'; cf. s. 13.69. If it refers to Federal 'funds' only, and if they are to be limited to 'need', then the 'general recurrent' allocations to the States for government schools should be applied to the 'needs' of the disadvantaged. If the word 'funds' includes distribution in State budgets, then the word 'need' takes on a different aspect. All children need education, and the bulk of the moneys goes towards meeting 'basic needs'.

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2. See I.K.F. Birch 'State-Aid at the Bar: the Dogs case', in Palmer (ed). Counsel for the plaintiffs attempted 'to show how central Catholic schools were to the life of the Church'. This was obvious, but there was no evidence of authoritarian control. The case was lightened by amusing descriptions of what went on in the administration of Catholic education in the past.

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25. Transcript of broadcast, mimeo, p. 63.

26. Beazley, K.E. 'The Commonwealth Ministry of Education: an experience in the Whitlam Government 1972-75' in Murray Smith (ed), p. 41. For a review, see C. Puplick, 'Education at the top: Beazley and his barbs', The Australian, 3 December, 1980.

27. Beazley, K.E. CPD, 30 May, 1973, pp. 2844-5.

28. Grattan, M. 'State Aid: the end of an issue', The Age, 16 June, 1973; cf. G. Williams, 'Pity the poor little rich school', The Australian, 29 November, 1973.

29. McManus, F.P. The Australian, 14 November, 1973, and CPD, 5 December, 1973, p. 2483. Note his excuse / explanation, p. 2485, that, although Mr Beazley 'can make a promise, he is bound by the decision of his Party'.

30. Beazley, K.E., ref 26, p. 30

31. Ibid., p. 41.

32. Beazley, K.E. 'The Labor Party in Opposition and Government' in Birch and Smart (eds), p. 99.

33. Cf. P. Rae, CPD, 5 December, 1973, pp. 2477, 2490, 2505.

34. Beazley, K.E. CPD, 26 September, 1972, p. 1936; also, cited by L. Bowen, CPD, 29 November, 1973, p. 4092.

35. The Australian, 'P.M., Beazley, "broke school aid pledges", 31 August, 1973.

36. Ref 14. Cf. A Staley, CPD, 27 November, 1973, pp. 3911-2, and the confirmation provided by L. Bowen, p. 3931.

37. Snedden, B. CPD, 29 November, 1973, p. 4089; P. Rae, 5 December, 1973, p. 2476. Daily Telegraph, 28 October, 1972.

38. P. Rae (CPD, 5 December, 1973, p. 2477) spoke of this letter (p. 2478) as 'held secret and never published'. He appreciated that the term of reference, 3 (b), specified that grants were to be 'in addition to existing Commonwealth commitments', which was the initial interpretation of the Committee itself (s. 1.14). Beazley's letter supplied a different directive, and the Committee saw it this way; s. 1.19.

39. Beazley, K.E., ref 26, p. 42. His comment relates more to internal debates within the Labor Cabinet than to altercations with the Opposition Parties.

40. Beazley, K.E., ref 26, Tables 8 & 9 on p. 41; note the statement (p. 40) that 'most States did not come up to this 20 per cent equivalent for their grants'. Beazley did not mention the taxation variation of 1974. See Mortensen in D'Cruz and Sheehan (eds) for an analysis.

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## PARENTS OR SCHOOLS

In the words of Claude Forell of *The Age*:

> Clearly, the fairest and most accurate way of assessing need would be to examine the circumstances of each child and family and to provide accordingly. But the committee has chosen a cruder and more practicable method: it has ranked schools rather than pupils according to need and proposed to compensate them on a sliding scale. [1]

It is not quite correct to say that the Committee chose its method. The Report (1.4) states that the terms of reference directed it to consider 'the financial needs of schools'. The Committee interpreted this phrase to mean that it was to be concerned 'with the resources used in the schools and not with the financial situation of the parents of pupils'. Section 5.14 of its Report continues:

> Direct forms of assistance to individual families are regarded as being an aspect of the general social policy of the Australian government which extends beyond schools. Nor has the fiscal capacity of parents to contribute to the education of their own children been taken into account for this would involve a detailed knowledge of parental income and the introduction of means-tested fees into the public system.

This latter statement was an admission that not all parents who chose government schools were 'poor'. In fact, some, including politicians who boast of their choice of these schools, are well-to-do. The important point, neglected in research, is: 'What is the occupational/income distribution of parents with children at various schools.' The non-government sector has been far less secretive; cf. the four AISV surveys and the writer's own Case Study 1969-1974 (Mortensen, 1977). [2]

If justice is to be done, a knowledge of income and a comparison with the Australian spectrum is essential. Unless there are common principles applying to parents in both the government and non-government sectors, the idea of fees in the public system is a non-issue and bears no relation to the problem.

According to section 6.38:

> The method used by the Committee for assessing the needs of schools in the non-government sector is in principle the same as that used for the government sector. That is to say, attention has been paid to the use of recurrent resources within the schools and not to the plight of parents or the wishes of school authorities to reduce debts. The method used by the Committee relies mainly on the real resources currently employed in a school.

The phrase 'in principle' was open-ended. It implies that the criteria were not exactly the same. First, the reference to 'parents' and 'debts' was quite irrelevant to government schools where no parent pays tuition fees and no school bears debt.

The Committee took school size into consideration in comparative calculations on the index of recurrent resource for government schools (6.11). Its Figure 6.1 shows that, with primary schools of below 150 pupils, there is a sharp rise in teacher/pupil ratio. In assessing Catholic systemic schools no adjustment was made 'for school size, on the grounds that unlike government systems, which have a legal obligation to provide places for pupils across a State irrespective of economic considerations, non-government schools are not obliged to operate with uneconomic enrolments'. (6.39). [3]

## HIGH RESOURCES: REDUCED SUPPORT

The Committee decided that it 'believes that there are some non-government schools for which no case can be made on an overall relative needs basis for this type of Commonwealth support'. This decision ignored the fact that many such schools had a high proportion of Year 11 and 12 students and that this contributed to high salary costs and a high Index. [4]

There was nothing to stop the continuation of the benefit under the *States Grants (Schools) Act* which would have assisted all schools to stabilise basic costs. The only explanation of the Committee's action has come from Mrs Jean Blackburn, its Deputy Chairperson, who offered gentle criticism of the Australian Government: 'I feel in some ways it would have been fairer to phase out the aid to these schools. This would have allowed schools losing aid to budget in advance. It could also have allowed some schools to drop standards and keep on receiving aid'. [5]

Section 2.12 stated: 'The Committee values the rights of parents to educate their children outside government schools. It appreciates the high standard which some non-government schools have reached often after years of effort... It accepts the right of parents to choose schooling above the level to which the Committee's recommendations are designed to raise government schools and non-government schools which are at present below them... It does not accept their right to public assistance to facilitate this choice.'

The typical reaction of a non-Catholic was that of the barrister, S.E.K. Hulme:

> The policy may be summed up: 'No matter how rich you are, we will assist you to send your child to any of the schools least well equipped to teach him. No matter how poor you are, we will not assist you to send your child to the school best equipped to teach him; but if you shift him to a school less well equipped, we will do so, and the less well equipped the school you choose, the more we will assist you.' And that is the product of 23 years' hard thinking in Opposition![6]

This argument raises issues, still far from solution, of distributive justice among parents. First, there is the comparison of parents of similar means and responsibilities sending their children to non-government and government schools respectively, each having a similar cost per student. Secondly, there is the relative support for non-government schools with different inputs and staffing. The issue is complicated by the deceptively low fees in Catholic schools which hide the contributed services of religious, the workloads accepted by lay teachers, the planned giving and/or parish cash contributions which involve many Catholics in the community, even though they are not directly associated with the schools. Nor can one neglect the overall low socio-economic status of parents of children in some Catholic schools compared with non-Catholic schools.

*I would suggest that section 2.12 could have been replaced with the following:*

> These parents have no right in respect to need of school but we consider that they have a right to a basic grant proportionate to that provided to all government school children. We support the application of this principle on the following grounds:
>
> The cost of assisting parents in high resource schools is only a small proportion of the total moneys flowing to primary and secondary education; one cannot appeal to 'scarce resources' economic theory.
>
> We have no evidence to assume that the majority of parents sending their children to Category A schools have unlimited resources to meet the increased costs.

In 3 (c) of the Terms of Reference, the Government stipulates that the grants recommended by the Interim Committee are to be 'directed towards increased expenditure on schools and not in substitution for continuing efforts by the State and non-government school authorities'. The Interim Committee responded by stating that 'this implies that the level of private contributions, generally speaking, should rise in proportion to incomes (1.22)'. [7]

*The Committee might then have added:*

> This directive must be interpreted in the light of the situation in various schools. At first glance, schools in categories A-D with 'high fees' have non-Catholic parents who are 'well-to-do' and could make greater contributions as expenditure rises. This demand is unacceptable for the following reasons:
>
> After careful consideration of the average total expenditure per pupil in a government school, and in particular government schools, we are convinced that fees, if below $800 or $900 in 1973/74, are not high. The highest fees are found in Victoria where government school per pupil expenditure is highest.

> Non-government schools have been measured individually against the *average* State school figure and not against the many State schools which exceed this standard.
>
> We have no knowledge of the spectrum of incomes of those attending schools with 'high fees'; our findings cannot be formed, therefore, by their capacity to pay.
>
> While schools in categories F-H, almost universally Catholic, contain a number of children of modest socio-economic background, they are also present in schools of other categories. Children should not be discriminated against because of sacrifices made by the family.
>
> When considering the application of directive 3 (c) that there shall be 'continuing efforts by the States and non-government school authorities', we assume that present policies with respect to tax concessional deductions for education will continue; that parents with children at non-government schools will obtain average movements in wages and will not be faced with unemployment. We see circumstances in which some non-government school communities cannot support the burden of both taxes and fees for education.
>
> There is evidence that all non-government schools wish to broaden the spectrum of their intake and to avoid circumstances which would make them elitist or expose them to accusations of this nature.

In respect to the latter suggestion, Claude Forell was of like mind. He stated: 'But one of the consequences of the new policy will be to make these (best endowed) schools even more exclusive and elitist than they are now.' [9]

J.L. Rundle, chairman of the Association of Independent Schools in South Australia, noted that the loss of grants endangered first a minimum of 10 per cent of children whose fees were subsidised by bursaries. [10] The withdrawal of public funds per pupil was liable to lead to one of three developments: an increase in parent fees, retrenchment and lowering of standards, or closure. In fact, the latter was common, for as Senator J.L. Carrick, then Minister for Education, stated in 1977: 'During the three year period 1974-76, more than 60 non-government schools closed. Included in these figures were 10 closures in schools in the top categories, that is, the so-called wealthy schools.' [11]

In its Terms of Reference 2 (b), the Government requested the Interim Committee to take into account both the expansion of existing schools and the establishment of new ones. Karmel stated:

> There is a point beyond which it is not possible to consider policies relating to the private sector without taking into account their possible effects on the public sector whose strength and representativeness should not be diluted. The unco-ordinated expansion of the private sector would lead to a wasteful duplication of resources (2.13).

> In the absence of any directive from the Government on the degree to which grants ought to be provided for the expansion of the non-government sector, the Committee has taken the view that it would be reasonable to make funds available to enable the non-government school sector to maintain its share of school enrolments at the level existing in 1972 (7.14).

The Interim Committee did not state that 1972 was the year in which Catholic primary school enrolments reached an all-time low; that the fall in enrolment was more probably due to economic pressure on poorer parents than lack of confidence in their schools; that it would be reasonable to assess the wishes of parents in a zone before a decision was made to build a school of any particular character.

## THE CATHOLIC REACTION

According to Forell:

> The freedom of educational choice and opportunity for Protestant and other non-Catholic parents is to be reduced progressively, while that of the Catholic community is to be enhanced... It remains to be seen whether the bishops will overcome their scruples to accept what the Federal Labor Government has offered in such flagrant breach of the principle they were at pains to acknowledge.[12]

The Australian Episcopal Conference issued a statement on the Report.[13] It praised 'many positive aspects' but noted that 'some serious reservations must be made. We particularly regret that the principle of a basic recurrent grant to every Australian child had been abandoned'. In the event of some children being completely excluded from any share in Federal financial assistance, the Bishops indicated a desire to give 'all possible support... even to the extent of renouncing in their favor some of the aid allocated'. Mr Beazley stated that 'the Act was a States Grants (Schools) Act, not a States Grant (Churches) Act, nor a States Grants (Bishops) Act'. 'If the money could, in fact, be intercepted by bishops and returned, then it was going to churches' - an unconstitutional action.[14]

At the opening of a physical education centre at Canberra Grammar School in 1973, the Minister said: 'We grant money to schools - not to the bishops to do as they would like.' In opening additions to Christian Brothers' High School, Lewisham, Mr Beazley stated: 'It does not help me as Minister for Education, when dealing with my Cabinet colleagues, asking them to grant sums of money to Catholic schools, to have Catholic bishops passing resolutions asking the faithful to return the money.'[15] When Bishop Kelly explained that it was a matter of principle, viz., 'the right of every Australian parent to some Government help in the education of their child', Mr Beazley stated that he personally accepted the principle, but, once a contrary decision had been made, 'it would be unconstitutional for the money to be intercepted or re-directed by the bishops'.[16]

The Jesuit Provincial of Australia (Fr P. O'Sullivan, S.J.) supported the statement of the bishops. He wrote: 'In line with the above policies and in line with the concept of Christian sharing, the Jesuits propose to organise a token gesture of sharing with Category A schools.' [17] B.A. Santamaria had also suggested that Catholic schools should transfer 'money which justly belongs to children in Protestant schools'. [18] I recommended some similar gesture: 'It would be foolish to consider that an unjust settlement in which Catholic schools will benefit will be made acceptable to the non-Catholic and Jewish communities by a reiteration of principle alone.' [19] The suggestions seem to have come to nothing.

The reaction of the Archbishop of Melbourne, Cardinal Knox, is significant. His statement, a signed editorial in *The Advocate*, 16 August, 1973, was the most strongly worded of any Australian bishop and directed to a single theme: 'It is difficult to see how the Government of this nation could truly claim to be the Australian Government if there were a body of Australian students categorically excluded from its concern.' [20]

In a joint statement, the Catholic Bishop of Sandhurst, (B.D. Stewart), and his colleague, the Bishop of Sale (A.F. Fox), had earlier stated that they did not support a discriminatory action which involved non-Catholic schools almost entirely. Their response was not unexpected as neither has ever deviated from principle. They reiterated their position in *The Advocate*:

> Our position was stated clearly in the two submissions the Federal Catholic Schools Committee made to the Karmel Committee and was supported by members of the delegation who met the Karmel Committee. 'Special grants to schools in poorer areas and to otherwise disadvantaged children should be separate from over and above the per capita grants.' [21]

Bishop Stewart was keenly aware of the relation of the basic per capita grant to the guarantee of funds available from year to year and the possibility of educational planning. [22] A policy, based on extreme need alone, combined with demands for continuing effort, offers no such guarantee.

In 1976, Mr Beazley wrote of four major rebuffs to Labor policies; the massive attack (1973) by the VSTA; sustained misrepresentations by the Ministers of Education in Victoria and NSW; the (Catholic) Episcopal reaction; and the Senate obstruction. [23]

He had described the Karmel Report as 'a masterpiece of compassion, a compendium of common sense, a basis for preliminary action'. [24] Similar statements were made by Archbishop Rush of Brisbane ('masterly, humane') [25] and Archbishop Gleeson of Adelaide, who admitted reservations but described it as 'a competent, humane and compassionate document'. [26] Even so, Mr Beazley was to say later: 'I've been absolutely shocked by the ferocity of the attacks by headmasters and ecclesiastics upon me and the Karmel Committee.' [27]

However, he was, perhaps, most annoyed with the article by B.A. Santamaria, referring to the Federal Government's 'golden hand shake' and the 'political' bribe offered Roman Catholics. [28] Claude Forell also questioned motives: 'Whatever virtues can be attributed to the Government's schools aid policy, I agree with Mr Santamaria that it is not innocent of the intent to seduce the votes and blessings of the Catholic community.' [29] Ronald Conway agreed, but was 'not as dogmatic as Mr Santamaria as to what the "Greeks" will ultimately expect to gain in return'. [30]

The Minister referred to a 'deliberate campaign', but there was certainly no evidence of planning or co-ordination in the response of the statements of individual bishops, Father Martin, Catholic academics, Catholic laity in the Parents and Friends' Federations, Santamaria, Conway and last, perhaps least, the present writer. [31]Their dissent was not without foundation.

Fr Martin expressed his own opinion in the following terms: 'I subscribe to the principle of a basic minimum grant for all children and I would hope that this would be part of the ultimate policy followed at both State and Federal levels.' [32]

When he claimed that Santamaria was 'obviously unaware of the real complexities of Federal grants' and that he was using a 'fear ploy', the latter declared that 'Fr Martin believes that the Category A schools and their 58,000 children should be phased out of state aid. His only argument with the Government seems to be one of timing.' [33]

In signing the report, Fr Martin certainly accepted the latter thesis. For example, he stated: 'I felt it was the best possible solution to a very difficult problem at this time. I still subscribe to it, but I do not agree with the Cabinet decision to eliminate these schools immediately.' [34] However, his subscribing to a minimum grant for all and his support for an eventual 'phasing out' of some are inconsistent.

A minority report was possible and could have been based on the argument advanced by the present writer in a 1974 paper. To quote:

> Any appraisal of the work of the Interim Committee must consider its terms of reference which made explicit mention of the 'financial needs of schools'. The Committee interpreted its role narrowly as concern 'with the resources used in the schools and not with the financial situation of the parents of pupils'. Justice to the taxpayer with children at non-government schools was not the issue. He had made his contribution to funding of education but, according to the terms of reference, there was to be no substitution for his 'continuing effort'.

> It follows that *Schools in Australia* should be regarded as an emergency document dealing with disadvantage, not a primer of principles on justice to parents or pupils. When the Committee phased out grants for schools in Category A and Cabinet decided to terminate these grants from 1 January 1974, their action could be justified as within the terms of reference. If assessment of 'needs' by Karmel had been coupled with Cabinet decisions to give a basic recurrent grant according to the McMahon formula, the Government would have presented a coherent plan. [35]

## THE OPINIONS OF AUSTRALIANS

A Gallup poll (*The Sun; The Herald*, 6 October, 1973) revealed little sympathy with Government policies depriving 105 non-government schools of aid. The answers (%) were as follows: More schools should lose aid (19); fewer or no schools should lose aid (55); no answer (7); 105 is about right (19). Catholics were more opposed to the Government's decision than people of other denominations.

If anything, the emphasis showed more support for the funding of non-government schools than earlier polls. For example, in *The Herald*, 8 August, 1969 and 29 May, 1970, 36% favoured increases in grants and 34% were for 'leave as is'. In the edition of 7 November, 1970, 44% were for an increase, while 30% favoured 'no change'; 'support for more aid was strongest among younger people'. Figures in *The Sun*, 13 April, 1972, were 36% for increase, 32% for no change.

A 1975 poll (*The Herald*, 29 August, and *The Sun*, 30 August showed an increase in support for 'Aid', 68% being in favour of an increase, 29% opposing. In 1980 (*The Herald*, 5 August), 66% of Australians wanted the Federal Government to continue 'giving financial aid to private schools'; 30% were opposed. The Labor Government's reduction of grants to some schools during 1984 was opposed by 52% (*The Sun*, 29 October; *The Herald*, 1 November, 1983).

The judgment of the public at large does not support lobbyists and politicians who have opposed 'State Aid'. It also says something about the fairness of Australians, the majority of whom send their children to, or have themselves attended, government schools.

## FORMATION OF A CATHOLIC 'SYSTEM'

Karmel (4.15) referred to the 'loose system' of diocesan owned schools and 'the uneven and sometimes weak' goverance of parochial schooling (6.5). For these reasons, the Committee decided that 'there would be an increased likelihood of achieving an equitable distribution of resources across schools if grants were made to parochial schools on a systemic basis. Moreover, the reliability of data from individual schools is at present generally low... In addition, the Committee saw significant educational advantage in encouraging the professionalisation of the administration of Catholic education, together with lay participation ...'

The Committee understood that the proposal would 'be welcomed by Catholic education authorities as it will facilitate an equitable distribution of funds and a rationalisation of school resources (13.19)'. A 'systemic' approach would now be defined as the development of a procedure by which a group of related schools are funded according to their own criteria of distributive justice - approved by the appropriate State Planning and Finance Committee of the Schools Commission.

The Catholic authorities have always sought to provide an education for the poor and, in earlier days, this was the great contribution of the religious congregations. Those religious who worked in schools with children of poor parents worked no harder, but had less means than those who were in schools containing children from the 'middle class'. With the decrease in the proportion of religious and the growth of government funding, the varying conditions of schools demanded redress of imbalances in their financial capacity to meet needs. A 'systemic' approach to handle 'block' funding could be justified, and the process has led to expansion and change in the role of Catholic Education Offices. McLay *et al*, in Queensland *Project Catholic 'School'*, recognise that the schools 'can no longer operate adequately in the familial manner', but they are concerned that bureaucratic modes of operation will endanger 'the human relations aspect' demanded by 'basic philosophical and theological interpretations'. [36] Whatever the meaning of this latter phrase, pontifical religious congregations ( a more appropriate term than orders) have a special role within the Catholic Church and need autonomy to exercise it. Vatican II, with its document *Christus Dominus* (1965), has changed the relations between religious congregations and the Sacred Congregation for Religious and Bishops of Dioceses. Some congregations have retained greater autonomy than others. This may be attributed to their recognition of the issues at stake, their co-operation in meeting the needs of the local Church, and the maintenance of stability in a unique vocation with special demands, including missionary activity.

In Queensland, according to McLay, 'the relationship between diocesan offices and diocesan councils and order-owned schools has been close and generally harmonious'. [37] This was also the view of the late Msgr J.E. Bourke, director of the Federal Catholic Education Office, 1969-1978, who wrote of the situation immediately prior to the advent of the Karmel Report. [38] He also noted that, before 1972, relations were 'vaguely defined' and McLay, writing in 1978, refers to 'a certain vagueness in formal terms' in Queensland: 'This latter circumstance seems to have prevailed in spite of an obvious effort to involve Religious Orders in educational administration at diocesan level, through their representative membership of diocesan education councils and similar bodies.' [39] The appointment of religious to Catholic Education Offices, even the presence of Provincials on policy-making Commissions, does not lead to classic bureaucratic structures, but rather to a co-ordinating 'system', which has worked well because of the dedication, understanding and efficiency of those concerned. The comment of McLay is interesting in this context:

> The community model of the Church, seen specifically as the Body of Christ, has moreover a corporate quality that points to the Church as a system interacting with its environment in the manner of an organism. It has, therefore, to adapt continually to change in its external situation so as to continue to fulfil its purpose. There is a peculiar affinity between such an ecclesial community-oriented image and the organismic or systemic model of administration, now popular in management theory. [40]

The word 'systemic' is not used here in the narrow technical sense used by Karmel and the Schools Commission Reports to describe school groupings. McLay is rather describing the integration of Catholic schools into a 'system' as understood in sociological theory. No systems model finds an idealised replica in the real world, and it would be naive to deny an underlying struggle on issues of ideology, authority, and power, such as described for the Archdiocese of Melbourne by Helen Praetz. [41]

## DEBATES IN PARLIAMENT

When the Schools Commission Bill, 1973, was presented before the House of Representatives in October, it was confronted with eleven Opposition amendments. [42] However, all were defeated, and the battle was fought out more meaningfully in the Senate. The Opposition's prime aims were:-

> To restore to high category schools, grants which they had lost;
>
> To amend Clause 13 (3) making Government schools' a primary obligation' of Governments 'and to broaden its obligation to provide or assist in the provision and maintenance of educational opportunities for all children which are of the highest standard and which recognise the prior right of parents to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children'. This latter rendering was considered to be more consistent with Article 26 of the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights.

The Liberal and Democratic Labor Parties were prepared to accept a double dissolution on the issue, but the Country Party gave no support and, from 12 December, 1973, its leader, The Hon J.D. Anthony, worked successfully to obtain a compromise agreement restoring grants to Category A schools in accordance with the recommendations of the Interim Committee. [43] This category (and B) still got less in 1974 than in 1973, and no one could claim that the Karmel exercise had clarified any principle, particularly that associated with parent right. As stated previously, it was not to be concerned with 'the financial situation of the parents of pupils' (1.4) or 'plight of parents' (6.38).

Mr Bowen stated that the Government would have to spend another $114 m. (1972 Act) on private schools as well as the $694m. covered by the Bill before the Senate. The Opposition countered by making it clear that they were not opposing the essence of the Government bill; they were merely asking the Government to honour promises. They would vote for repeal of the 1972 Act if the Government amended its own bill to allow $10 m. ($5 m. per annum) allocation to schools in higher categories. Mr Bowen reacted: 'Unless $5 m. goes to wealthy schools, $700 m. is withheld from the needy... You are trying to blackmail us.' [44]

## RESPONSE OF THE PRESS

*The Age* welcomed the thrust of the Karmel Committee's recommendations which was 'to distribute finance on the basis of need' (8 August, 1973). [45] The editorial stated: 'There will also be claims that, besides being unjust to some schools, the classification system is unjust to parents who make sacrifices to give their children a better education. But the point is that a good education is not something which should have to be bought by parental struggle or which should be available to those whose parents can afford it.'

*The Australian* of the same date was critical. For example: 'The best way to cope with the problem would be to retain the per capita grants for all schools and give extra assistance to the poorer establishments which genuinely need it.' [46] Responding to this editorial, Malcolm Fraser stated: 'I am glad you have come to this conclusion. It represents the policy which the Liberal Party was enunciating last year and which...you were then opposing.' [47]

*The Herald*'s comment was in the same terms: 'Strong arguments accumulate against what look to be unjust anomalies and a primitive system of judgment in grading independent schools for generous, partial or no government aid at all.' [48] *The Herald* seemed to have forgotten its editorial of November 28, 1969, which stated: 'The risk of some temporary anomalies should now be accepted in order to get relief flowing.'

Significantly, *The Age* did not join *The Herald* and *The Australian* in claiming rights for parents. In this respect, the Editor was sticking to the principles of a decade. However, the editorial of 29 November, 1973, gives a fine summary of the political situation:

> The Prime Minister has created the illusion that the Government's whole schools aid programme is being irredeemably jeopardised by Opposition obstructionism in the Senate. If Mr Whitlam were to spring an election ... he could pull it off, but it would be a trick; there is always the risk that people would not be fooled... Both Mr Whitlam and Mr Beazley gave assurances before the elections that no school would get less from the Commonwealth than it was to receive this year. These promises were broken when Cabinet decided... The Opposition can rightly claim that it is merely trying to force the Government to honour its pre-election undertakings.

## REFERENCES

1. Forell, C. 'Blessed are the needy, some more than others', The Age, 28 June, 1973.

2. Mortensen, K.G. (1977).

3. Cf. Schools Commission Report for the Triennium 1976-78, 13.26.

4. In assessing 'high resource' schools, the Interim Committee used actual salaries if they were higher than notional salaries. This militated against schools with a stable staff who had moved up incremental scales or who had been recruited to boarding schools in country areas. No consideration was given to schools with a high proportion of senior secondary students, even though the Committee had the relative numbers (Figure 4.6). It must have had some idea of the relative costs, cited in later Commission reports.

5. Balderstone, D. 'Phasing of aid fairer: expert', The Age, 11 August, 1973.

6. Hulme, S.E.K. The Age, 11 August, 1973.

7. Cf. SC Report for the Triennium 1976-78, 13.74 (f), where the demand became mandatory - in spite of the obvious signs of economic crisis and uncertainty.

8. Cf. B. Crittenden, 'Arguments and Assumptions of the Karmel Report' in D'Cruz and Sheehan (eds), p. 18: 'There are government schools - fully supported by public funds - that are now above the minimum desirable standard of education.'

9. Forell, op. cit, ref 1. His phrase, 'best endowed', would be termed, more accurately, 'of high recurrent resource'.

10. Rundle, J.L. Sunday Mail, 8 July, 1973.

11. Carrick, J.L. 'Why private schools need Canberra's aid', The Age, 7 July, 1977. (Note Tandberg's cartoon, 'Head of the River: you wouldn't let them sink, would you'.) Cf. the comments of Bishop Frank Carroll on the Guidelines, 'Campaign against school funds: Carrick defends Govt decision', The Catholic Weekly, 21 July, 1977.

12. Forell, op. cit., ref 1.

13. The Advocate. 'Full text of the Australian Episcopal Conference on the "Karmel Report" ', 6 September, 1973.

14. The Advocate. 'Mr Beazley stresses grants were made for schools, not churches', 11 October, 1973.

15. Ibid.

16. The Sun. 'Bishops rapped over schools', 27 May, 1974.

17. The Australian, 16 November, 1973; cf. the Advocate, 'Jesuits plan "sharing" with schools in Category A', 15 November, 1973.

18. Santamaria, B.A. 'A bribe with barbs', The Age, 9 August, 1973.

19. Mortensen, K.G. 'Implications for Catholic Schools in Karmel Report', The Advocate, 30 August, 1973.

20. Cardinal Knox. 'Others make sacrifices too', The Advocate, 16 August, 1973. Cf. The Herald, 17 August, and The Age/The Australian/The Sun, 18 August. Note The Advocate, 5 March, 1970, where Cardinal Knox stated that allocations for education were a matter of justice and not merely of needs.

A 'Meeting of Victorian Catholic Schools Committee' (8 March, signed F. Martin, 14 March, 1970) recommended as policy to the Victorian bishops for the May election: ' Stress on the rights of every child to a basic amount of assistance. Needs should be considered only after that basic amount is guaranteed for every child.' Fr Martin summarised the address of P. Thwaites to the Headmasters' Conference, 1970: Every child is entitled to an agreed minimum cost for education; the Government should add to this amount on a needs basis; those who want something more than that should pay for it themselves. Fr Martin noted: 'This is remarkably like the kind of thinking we have been doing on the Right-Needs issue.'

21. The Age. 'R.C. school chief hits "fear ploy" by Santamaria', 10 August; The Advocate, ' "Discrimination" in Report - bishops', 23 August, 1973; and a letter (The Advocate, 11 October, 1973) from the Bishop of Ballarat, R.A. Mulkearns. Cf. the statement of the Australian Episcopal Conference, 'Bishops applaud Karmel Report but make "serious reservations" ', The Advocate, 6 September, 1973: 'We particularly regret that the principle of a basic recurrent grant to every Australian child has been abandoned.'

22. The Advocate. 'Restore "per capita" grant says bishop', 15 November, 1973. Cf. 'Fight for school funds', 16 May, 1974, for a later statement by Bishop Fox.

23. Beazley, K.E. 'The Labor Party in Opposition and Government' in Birch and Smart (eds), pp. 109-110.

24. The Australian. 'Social attitudes to education are questioned', 11 July, 1973.

25. The Advocate. 'Archbishop Rush says Karmel Report is "masterly, humane" ', 19 July, 1973.

26. The Advocate. 'Archbishop Gleeson backs Karmel Report with reservations', 16 August, 1973. John McDonald, his director of Catholic Education, had earlier (ibid., 5 July) spoken of it as 'humane and compassionate'.

27. Williams, G. 'Beazley rejects "violent attempts to smear Karmel committee" ', 27 October, 1973.

28 Santamaria, B.A., op. cit., ref 18.

29. Forell, C. 'Tangled webs in State aid plot', The Age, 16 August, 1973.

30. Conway, R. The Advocate, 16 August, 1973.

31. The Herald. 'Criticism not organised - Santamaria', 15 August, 1973, and P. Kelly's 'Attack on Karmel Report a deliberate campaign - Beazley' in The Australian, 15 August, 1973.

32. The Advocate. 'Look at total Karmel Report, says Fr Martin', 16 August, 1973. An accompanying article, 'Newspaper corrects report on Fr Martin', stated that earlier editions of The Herald (9 August, 1973) 'misinterpreted his statements and the heading and introduction were later changed... later editions made it clear that Fr Martin was not speaking for the Catholic Church but as director of the Melbourne Catholic Education Office'.

33. The Age. 'R.C. school chief hits "fear ploy" by Santamaria', 10 August; The Sun, 'Santamaria hits back at priest', 11 August, 1973. Note The Australian, 10 August, where P.J. Keating, now Labor's Federal Treasurer, refers to Santamaria's criticisms as 'a piece of political bigotry', and The Sun, 'School aid report "extremely fair" ', 13 August, 1973, where M. Charlesworth attacks Santamaria's comment as 'politically motivated and unjustified'.

34. See ref 32.

35. Mortensen, K. G. in D'Cruz and Sheehan (eds), pp. 155-156.

36. McLay et al, pp. 39, 1.

37. Ibid, p. 4.

38. Bourke, J. E. in Jecks (ed), p. 262.

39-40. McLay et al: (39) p. 37; (40) p. 4.

41. Praetz, Helen (1980).

42. Weller, P. 'The establishment of the Schools Commission; a case study in the politics of education' in Birch and Smart (eds), p. 63.

43. Anthony, J.D. The Catholic Weekly, 10 January, 1974.

44. The Australian. 30 November, 1973.

45. The Age. Editorial. 'Making myth a reality', 8 August, 1973.

46. The Australian. Editorial, 8 August, 1973: 'What certainly can be argued is that the Karmel Committee's method of dividing the private school share of Government aid seems to be arbitrary, full of anomalies and potentially damaging to the whole structure of Australian education.'. McKinnon admits (Palmer, ed, p. 111) that some applications of the 'needs' policy have 'been questionable'.

47. Fraser, M. The Australian. 14 August, 1973.

48. The Herald. Editorial. 'Strange line in school aid', 8 August, 1973. Another significant quote was: 'In some cases those parents and communities who have done most for their schools will be penalised for their initiative. All taxpayers are involved. Many not on high incomes will get nothing back for educating their children.' Again, note, McKinnon, ref 46, and ref 2 in Chapter 12.

# 5 *Independent School Organisations*

## INTRODUCTION

'In July, 1983 there were 2362 non-government schools in Australia compared with 2,312 operating in 1982. The number of students attending these schools totalled 734,784; 558,542 were enrolled at Roman Catholic schools, 63,904 at Anglican schools and 112,338 were enrolled at all other non-government schools. This represented an overall increase of 3.2 per cent over the number of students enrolled in 1982 (711,682)... Over the six year period 1978 to 1983, the number of non-government...students...increased as follows: Anglican 21.6%, Roman Catholic 10.4%, 'Other' 40.6%' (ABS 4216.0, 11 April, 1984).

This chapter discusses various school-based organisations that are active in defending the interests of non-government schools. It examines their policies and their relationships with one another. Chapters 6 to 8 will consider parent and teacher-based organisations in both the government and non-government sectors.

Two themes which are common to most chapters in this monograph are again developed: first, the right of all pupils to a just basic per pupil grant and, secondly, the autonomy of those schools which cater, specifically or generally, for poorer sections of the community. Despite considerable sacrifice, the latter cannot raise their resource level to that of government schools without equitable support for parents from taxation revenues contributed by the whole community according to means. The special character of such schools should not be prejudiced because they receive Government grants.

## NON-GOVERNMENT SCHOOL ORGANISATIONS

An independent school is an educational institution, not conducted for the profit of individuals, registered and/or approved in accordance with State law, but not administered directly by a State Department of Education.[1]

Major bodies representing Australian non-government schools are the National Council of Independent Schools (NCIS), the Headmasters' Conference (HMC), the Association of Heads of Independent Girls' Schools of Australia (AHIGSA), and the National Catholic Education Commission (NCEC).

### NATIONAL CATHOLIC EDUCATION COMMISSION

NCEC states the official Catholic viewpoint at a national level. It is responsible to the Australian Episcopal Conference through the Bishops' Committee for Education. The State Commissions are autonomous bodies with representation from the various dioceses and, therefore, have a general responsibility to the bishops of the particular State. The terms of reference of the NCEC, which were re-considered in early 1984, state:

> The Commission shall accept as a premise that the Church has, and must be seen to have, a deep and systematic concern for the quality of education available to all Australians. It shall maintain the Church's traditional special regard for the spiritually, culturally, physically, and financially disadvantaged or deprived. Education in Catholic schools shall be one major focus of the Commission's thought and work. Other focuses shall include the religious education of Catholic students not in Catholic schools, tertiary and post-secondary education, the continuing education in faith of young persons (but not seminary / religious theological education).

The charter of the NCEC is, therefore, distinct from that of other bodies concerned with the welfare of non-government schools.

The first chairman of the NCEC was Bishop Francis Carroll, now Archbishop of Canberra - Goulburn. He was succeeded for two terms by Fr J. Williams, the director of the Tasmanian Catholic Education Office. The new chairman, from 1 January, 1985, is Sir Bernard Callinan who served with distinction as a company and battalion commander in the 2nd AIF during World War 2, and has since been prominent in engineering practice, public instrumentalities, Government and Catholic bodies.

## NATIONAL COUNCIL OF INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS

NCIS aims to strengthen and promote the interests and welfare of independent schools; and to assist them to provide a liberal, scientific and general education and, where appropriate, a religious education for children. While the NCIS has sponsored seminars, such as those on the 'exceptional child' and, in 1979, on 'boarding schools', it normally leaves consideration of educational developments to HMC and AHIGSA. School representatives of these organisations are generally members of the Australian College of Education, a professional body covering all those concerned with education.

While HMC has made submissions on funding to the Commonwealth Government and Schools Commission, the complexity of the economic issues has led to NCIS taking substantial responsibility for collection of financial data, and for its interpretation and presentation to the relevant authorities. The NCIS Fifth National Conference (June, 1984) had as its theme: 'School Funding for the Eighties'.

NCIS was formed as a result of a meeting in 1968 of non-government schools, non-Catholic and Catholic. The Catholic sector established its own State and National Commissions at the same time. While the main membership of NCIS, and its leadership, has come from persons associated with the non-Catholic sector, a number of Catholic non-systemic schools administered by religious congregations are members; unfortunately, some in Sydney have recently withdrawn. A few Catholic schools are also members of HMC. Headmasters and distinguished educationalists in Catholic schools have certainly not been excluded from formulations of policy or from executive positions in NCIS. However, they in no sense present an 'official' Catholic position, and it has, on occasion, been claimed that their position is ambivalent. This has been inevitable, as the views of NCIS and NCEC run 'on parallel lines' rather than 'on a single track'.

On one occasion (1978), the NCIS affiliate, AISNSW (Association of Independent Schools, NSW), considered that NCIS in a 'Discussion Paper' ran 'the risk of being interpreted as lacking in friendship for the systemics'. On the other hand, in 1976, NCEC opposed the movement of the small sum of $2 m. intended by the Commonwealth Government as an initial move in raising the funding of Level 1 and 2 schools towards 20 per cent of recurrent costs for a government school pupil.[3] It could have been claimed that the Catholic authorities did not appreciate the problems of parents with children at Level 1 and 2 schools.

In 1983, the Hawke Government, through Senator Susan Ryan, Minister of Education and Youth Affairs, began to implement its policies, particularly reduction of recurrent funding to 41 schools. NCIS and its affiliates protested strongly. Neither these bodies nor headmasters initiated the meetings organised by new parent groupings and described in Chapter 6. However, Mr P.E. Rhoden, then chairman of NCIS, said that it would be 'unwise' if Senator Ryan disregarded these meetings and that there was 'widepread dissatisfaction with the undue haste with which she had acted to cut funding'.[4]

Peter Cornish, headmaster of Redlands Church of England Grammar School, said: 'I believe Senator Ryan refers to the cuts as 'positive discrimination'. I think that's a nonsense phrase. The children at this school have, quite clearly, been discriminated against.'[5] The headmaster of Brighton Grammar School advised parents of pupils at his school 'to follow the advice Mr Whitlam once gave: "Maintain your rage" '.[6] The headmasters of at least two schools administered by the Christian Brothers in Victoria, and one by the De La Salle Brothers, registered strong protests at the reductions. Michael Raper, the general secretary of the NSW Independent Teachers' Federation, recognised that 'the State aid debate has thrown non-government school principals into the public light and has added to what is already an over-loaded work role'.[7]

## FEDERAL CATHOLIC POLICY ON BASIC GRANT

The Catholic attitude to a basic per capita grant - set at '20 per cent' - still remains ambiguous. It is meaningless to adhere to a principle and condone an unreasonable erosion of its application. The '20 per cent' base grants were established, reasonably and conservatively, at both the Federal and the Victorian State level (where promises were made by the Hamer Government) in 1972. Then, as now, the grants to high resource schools, on behalf of parents, were relatively small when compared with the total expenditure on schooling.[8]

### THE NCEC

The NCEC *School Funding Policy* (November, 1982, B 9) states: 'The use of public funds must express in concrete terms each person's right to share in the community's education resources, in the context of the general state of the economy, parents' economic state, the local community's economic position, and the resources available to the persons and schools under consideration.' This principle implies equity for children in all types of school, attention to the income of individual parents, and the capacity of all local communities to give reasonable support to schools in their region.

*School Funding Policy* (C 19) refers to a 'basic grant for recurrent schooling costs for every Australian child', and Fr J.M. Williams, Chairman of the Commission, was firm in holding to this principle during the Federal pre-election discussions with Labor Party Shadow Ministers, J. Dawkins and C. Hurford.[9]

The final NCEC statement on the Party's platform did no more than list the facts, including Labor's plan to reduce the basic (the lowest) per pupil grant progressively. The closing paragraph expressed the Commission's 'concern for all children in Australian schools and its particular responsibility for Catholic children... The NCEC will continue to work towards a more equitable recognition by governments of the right of all involved in Australian schooling'. However, the document fails to defend the established grant and, thus, appears to concentrate on the short-term interests of Catholic schools. For example, it states: 'The NCEC acknowledges that Catholic schooling will benefit financially from the policies announced by both the major parties. The NCEC does not expect any Catholic school to receive smaller grants with either party in government.'[10]

The NCEC met with representatives of the Schools Commission in March, 1984. The reporting of the Catholic 'weeklies' published in the eastern capital cities is of interest. There is reference to protection of the rights/ right of choice/right of parents in schooling, without adequate quotation from the source - the above 'Policy', B 9, 10 - which stresses that the right is not recognised unless all children have access to public funds for education. Two papers stated that the NCEC pointed out that all students had an equal right to 'a share' in the educational resources of the community, whereas the NCEC had used the phrase 'to share', suggesting - far more clearly - equal treatment of parents, similarly placed with respect to income and family responsibility.[11]

## THE BISHOPS

On 1 September, 1983, the Catholic bishops re-affirmed the school funding policies of the NCEC. They 'expressed misgivings over the decision to reduce the basic recurrent grant to some students. The right of all students to share in educational funding would be endangered if this reduction were a move towards excluding any student from a basic grant.'[12]

'Misgivings' appears to be an understatement. First, the ALP policy then failed to guarantee the continuation to all of a per pupil grant beyond 1985. Secondly, any reduction in the present level is unjust, if the grant - when all factors are considered - is below that received by other parents of similar means in the government or non-government sectors. Is justice satisfied, if every student gets a 'basic grant' -

however low? It has even been suggested that 'Labor could, if it wished, decide to fight the next election with a commitment to maintain a small token grant to all wealthy schools, thus satisfying the Catholic Church's position with a minimum of compromise in its needs principle'![14]

Joanne Anderson has noted: 'The church's policy supports a basic grant for all private school students, although there has been no statement on how much that grant should be.'[15]

Senator Macklin declares that there are two principles, 'one concerning the right of each child to support for its education and the second concerning those who need more support than others'. He has stated: 'I put to the Catholic bishops by way of letter the argument that it is inevitable that those principles will come into conflict when one is faced with a cake the size of which one has no control over... I have not had many responses. I have received some letters...the gist of which is yes, it is a very difficult problem.'[16]

An editorial (1983) in *The Catholic Weekly* referred to 'the position which each and every Australian bishop has agreed to uphold and, which as a logical consequence, binds every educational instrumentality which derives its authority from the bishops'.[17] Its columnist, G. Scarrabelotti, has discussed the relationships existing between the Bishops / NCEC / State CECs. He quotes Fr Williams as saying that the bishops, by their endorsement of NCEC policy, have made it their own. It was this endorsement, rather than the authority of the NCEC, which made it binding on the State Commissions.[18]

## CATHOLIC RESPONSE TO THE GUIDELINES FOR 1984

As Chapter 19 is devoted to the Minister's Guidelines for 1984, this section can only refer to their main thrust: the reduction of grants to Group 1 schools which operated above the 'community standard'; the breaking of the nexus with government school costs which had been the basis for determining grants; and viability/impact studies before making either recurrent or capital grants.

Senator Ryan released her Guidelines on 28 July, 1983, and, on the following day, Fr T.M. Doyle, as director, CEOV, sent a telegram to her. The opening lines read: 'Commend you and your Government on Budgetary provision for 1984 to meet needs of Australian children. Balance in Guidelines between government and non-government schools should forestall divisive debate. Significant improvements in lower resource use schools will result from increased grants.'

On 29 July, Mr J.V. Faulkner, responsible for planning and research in the Melbourne CEO, also corresponded with the Minister: 'I write to you personally and as a Schools Commissioner to commend you and your Government on the quality of the Commonwealth Schools Commission Guidelines for 1984. They represent a clear indication of your commitment to improved education for all Australian children and your particular concern for those most in need of additional resources for their education. It is my hope that a major achievement of the guidelines will be to forestall the divisive debates that have occurred in the education community over recent years.'

Archbishop James Carroll wrote to Senator Ryan on 31 August, 1983, on paper headed CECNSW. He claimed: 'As already intimated to you, the many positive initiatives of the Guidelines have given great encouragement to all concerned with the quality of schools and with the particular needs of the present time.'

These documents were referred to, with quotation, by the Minister in the Senate.[19] She did not refer to the following sentence of Archbishop Carroll: 'The Commission has requested me to express the concern raised in the minds of many people by the reduction and possible eventual elimination of some recurrent grants and by the removal of the automatic percentage nexus with the standard government school costs for 1984.' Opposition senators had a copy of the letter and made the most of her omission. On the other hand, an official release from the CEC (NSW) declared that the Commission rejected the thesis that the Government had 'hidden motives'; it claimed that the Guidelines issued by the Minister should be 'sufficient to dispel such fears'.[20]

Following the release of the report on Radford College ( see Chapter 28), *The Canberra Times* made two points: 'The proposition that the Government is implementing a de-facto integration policy is based on recent changes in the financial guidelines... The net effect of these new principles is to increase the Federal Government's discretionary powers relating to funding of non-government schools.'[21] Reference was made to the correspondence cited in the September debate, pointing out that it 'flatly contradicted the sentiments expressed' in the statement by the Bishops on 1 September. The editorial noted the 'official silence from the Bishops and the NCEC since publication of the correspondence.' A 'staff correspondent' suggested that the NCEC did not view the thrust of the Guidelines as seriously as the Bishops.[22] Fr Williams, Chairman of the NCEC, immediately responded, saying that 'it is incongruous that The Canberra Times should see us in conflict with the Bishops'.[23]

In reply, Fr Doyle and Mr Faulkner said that they were 'resolutely and absolutely' opposed to integration of government and non-government schools.[24] In a letter to *The Advocate* , they stated: 'Your reprinting "courtesy, Catholic Weekly, Sydney" of The Canberra Times editorial, and particularly under the heading ['Schools' integration: first steps taken, says paper'] which you choose to highlight, perpetuates what are, to our minds, grossly misreading interpretations and implications of recent communications between ourselves and the Commonwealth minister of education.'[25]

They considered that all viewpoints - their own, the Bishops and the NCEC, were 'compatible'. I suggest that this claim cannot be substantiated when the question at issue is the 'basic grant'. There have been significant differences in emphasis and, unfortunately, a reluctance to deal concretely with the value of the grant and a policy of favouring the 'need' of others - said to be mainly in the Catholic sector.

The correspondence cited was not referred to by other Catholic authorities, but was quoted by spokesmen of the ALP - Mr Dawkins and Mr Simmons - to suggest Catholic approval for Labor policies.[26]

## CATHOLIC FUNDING POLICIES IN VICTORIA

It is important to consider the manner in which State Commissions have adhered to the letter and the spirit of the Bishops' policy on basic per capita grants. I consider Victoria only.

### STRUCTURES OF CATHOLIC EDUCATION

The NCEC is serviced by only a small Secretariate in Canberra, for it has only a limited operational role. On the other hand, large Catholic Education Offices are associated, in capital cities and country dioceses, with the State Commissions; they have to administer a large number of programs directly involving the schools.

The administrative centre of the Catholic Education Office of Victoria (CEOV) is situated in Melbourne. Each country diocesan CEO has its proper autonomy under its own 'Director' (Ballarat) or 'Administrative Director' (Sandhurst and Sale). The Director of the CEOV in Melbourne combines the role of co-ordinating the implementation of Commission policies with that of fulfilling the function of Director on a State-wide basis. The Director is currently, and has been in the past, also Director of Catholic Education in the Archdiocese of Melbourne.[27]

For policy decisions of the CECV to be effective, they have to be ratified by the Commissioners representing the Archdiocese of Melbourne and the country dioceses. During the 1979 pre-election campaign, commentary on proposals from the competing political parties emanated from Fr F.M. Martin as Executive Director of the CECV, but during the 1982 election, Fr T.M. Doyle, who now occupies this position, responded as Director of the CEOV, not of the CECV.[28]

### OFFICIAL POLICY IN VICTORIA

The official commentary of the CECV (1983) on funding,'Needs Basis', is stated in the following passage:

> Recurrent funding policies promoted by various groups within the non-government sector have revealed a variety of philosophical standpoints and views. In general, however, non-government school authorities have adopted policies of a basic per capita grant to all schools, with additional grants according to need. At the same time, there is a variety of views about the size of the basic grant in relation to the size of the needs distribution
>
> Catholic schools and pupils are obviously assisted by having the needs distribution as the major component. But the problem of distribution will remain while funds available are insufficient to meet requirements.
>
> The needs basis policy has as its fundamental ingredient the objective of providing every child with an equal opportunity to benefit from the educational process.[29]

This passage overlooks the fact that, if the basic per capita grant is reduced for everyone, 'the additional grants according to need' may not bring the total benefits to the 'needy' to the levels previously attained.

## PRE-ELECTION STATEMENTS (VICTORIA) 1982 AND 1979

Prior to the State election of 1982, Maslen stated: 'A spokesman for the Catholic Education Office, Mr Vin Fawkner (sic), last night applauded the Labor Party's policy on aid to non-government schools... "The Catholic Education Commission has always favored a policy of financing schools on the basis of their needs," Mr Fawkner (sic) said.' [30]

Fr Doyle responded to Maslen's article: 'There appears to be widespread misinterpretation of the comments made by a spokesman of the Catholic Education Office of Victoria... Comments are made in the light of clear policy decisions adopted by the CECV. One of policy decisions is that funds should be distributed according to a needs basis by means of a basic grant for all children together with a distribution according to comparative needs of children.' [31] While the letter sought information on 'the proposed level of State Government funding', there was no demand for retention of existing levels of a basic per pupil grant. A.D.P. Dyer, headmaster of Camberwell Grammar School, sought information from Fr Doyle as to 'what the Catholic Commission regards as a reasonable "basic grant for all children" '. [32] Fr Doyle's reply did not clarify the matter. He stated that 'the size of such a grant and the relationship between Commonwealth and State funding has been the subject of continuing political negotiation with Governments'. [33] The same could be said of the CECV response to the report of the State Board of Education: 'The policy of the CECV is therefore one of a reasonable basic grant and a needs element.' [34]

In this context, it is relevant to note the earlier letter of Fr Martin in 1979, when the two major political parties were presenting the same policies as in 1982: 'We have put a similar case to each party. The main point of the case was that the State should continue to operate its scheme for recurrent funds on the existing lines, leaving the application of a needs basis to Federal funding through the Schools Commission. We asked both parties to progressively increase the basic grant from 20 per cent to 25 per cent of government school operating costs by 1985.' [35] G.C. Morey-Nase, Executive Officer of the Association of Independent Schools (AISV), wrote in similar terms. [36] Margaret Willshire, president of VICSSO, and Jan McKenzie, president of VFSSPC, were appalled at 'the bob-each-way cynicism of these lobbyists'. [37]

The outcomes of the 1982 Labor victory in Victoria, particularly the formation of the State Board, are reserved for Chapters 25 to 27.

## PASTORAL LETTER: BISHOPS OF VICTORIA (1983)

On 9 October, 1983, the Victorian bishops issued *A Pastoral Letter on Education Matters*. They made the following statements with respect to the 'basic grant':

> ...the Australian Government is backing away from the principle of a fair basic grant to every child... We would support a system which recognises need as a factor in funding, provided that such a system builds on the provision of a basic grant for all children and that the basic grant is fair and realistic... Recently the Australian and Victorian Governments appear to have moved against the rights of parents by severely reducing the basic grant to some non-Government school pupils... There is the possibility that further cuts, or even the elimination of the basic grant, might follow... The basic grant must not become a mere token, or be completely abolished. [38]

The 'Pastoral' refers to the '23%' State grant made to every child in a non-government Victorian school during 1983 and to the Group 1, or lowest, 'basic', grant of '20%' at the Federal level. It is a pity that it did not add, unequivocally, that these grants should not be decreased, as they are certainly not overestimates in any evaluation according to Catholic concepts of right. Such a statement would have added force to another comment in the 'Pastoral': 'Its unfortunate that some money appears to be earmarked for 'needy' Catholic schools at the expense of other Church schools.' For one of the bishops, John Kelly, it was more than 'unfortunate'; he described it as 'Judas money'. [39]

## ADDRESS OF DEPUTY DIRECTOR, CEOV

Peter Annett, the Deputy Director of the CEOV spoke at the Victorian Parents' Council meeting of 16 April, 1984. A significant passage was: 'The use of public funds must express in concrete terms each person's right to share in the community's education resources, in the context of the general state of the economy, parents' economic state, the local community's economic position and the resources available to the persons and schools under consideration.' The Schools Commission did not release its report: *Funding Policies for Australian Schools* until 12 April, and Annett commented on the prior discussion paper, 'Options': 'The CECV re-iterated its belief that the Commonwealth ought to provide an equitable basic grant for the recurrent schooling costs of each Australian child... Given that most State Governments will be providing a basic grant and a needs component, there must be co-ordinated agreements between the Commonwealth and States...'

When asked in 'Question Time' as to a 'realistic' value for the basic grant, Annett said: 'The CECV, the National Commission, and the Bishops themselves, have never attempted to quantify what is a reasonable and equitable basic grant, because I believe to do so would be foolish in the political arena...' In his address, he had stated that 'the CECV strongly supported the implication that there be no further reduction in the basic grant' proposed in 'Options'.

He was 'pleased' that 'the State Liberal Party had moved away from a straight per capita grant to a basic grant plus a needs element. The move away from a straight per capita grant only is, of course, in accord with CECV policy'. This, as shown above, was the 1982, but not the 1979, policy. In response to a question, Annett said that 'every child should be eligible for a needs component', but receipt would 'depend on the particular measures used'.

When asked: 'Are you happy with funding of non-government schools?', he replied: 'A fair degree of the debate this evening has centred about what is a reasonable and equitable basic grant. It must be said, at the same time, that I have great concern for the fact that most of the children in our Catholic schools, over 170,000 of them, are in schools which generally operate at about 30% lower resource use levels than those in government schools. That is why I am certainly not satisfied with the level of funding available for non-government schools, particularly Catholic schools, in this State.' However, where Government is adamant about the non-government share of a cake already baked, a 'needs' allocation can only be at the expense of the 'basic grant'. Departures from equity must arise when the distribution is not related to the incomes of parents in different schools. [40]

## 'AFFIRMATIVE ACTION' IN THE VICTORIAN CATHOLIC SYSTEM

In Victoria (1982), 84% of full-time teachers in parish primary schools and 55% in secondary schools were female; in both instances, about half were single, half married. Half of the 45% of male secondary school teachers were married. In secondary schools, the proportion of lay non-Catholic teachers (26.2%) was higher than that of religious (11.1%).

The CECV, realising that few female lay teachers were applying for positions as principal, initiated a survey, the results of which were released in May, 1984. Of the 97 per cent of respondents who had never applied for a secondary school principal's position, the majority cited a preference for personal involvement with students through classroom teaching. Others cited insufficient training and experience, or the strains on personal and family life. Fr T. Doyle, commenting on the report, said: 'We hope that initiatives that are currently being considered by the CECV will encourage lay people to come forward with greater confidence to assume positions of responsibility in Catholic secondary schools.' [41] It may be noted, in passing, that developments in State school education have not led to the appointment of more female principals. [42]

## RELATIONSHIPS

### Government and non-government schools

Relationships between State and non-State schools since the Act of 1872 is deserving of a book to itself. In recent years, there has been far more division generated from outside than from within schooling. The headmasters of Melbourne High School - Langley and Ramsay, with their Army background, and the immortal Australian cricketer Woodfull - played a major role in promoting relationships with the non-government sector based on mutual respect. They found strong allies in Darling of Geelong Grammar, Hone of Melbourne Grammar, and Frederick of Wesley.[43] For more than a decade, informal arrangements at the local level have led to State technical school principals and staffs taking classes from Catholic schools. When schools are gutted by fire, their neighbours have been quick to offer whatever facilities and help they can. In some instances, co-operative planning has involved the building of a complex involving both government and non-government schools. 'Army Cadets' have, perhaps, been the greatest means of contact between schools of all types and socio-economic character in both sectors. Service in 'Cadets' created bonds and friendships between teachers and boys. My own personal contact with the Cadet Units of MHS and Collingwood Technical School has been close.

### Catholic and non-Catholic schools

Relationships between Catholic bodies and organisations such as AISs concerned largely, but not exclusively, with non-Catholic interests, have been cordial, but not close. Representatives of CEOs have been either members or observers of AIS/NCIS or committees set up within their structures. All believe in close collaboration with State Education Departments and welcome Commonwealth Schools Commission plans involving joint services. In Victoria, the non-government sector seconds staff to the specialist support teams available to children in all schools. CEOV has posted eight teachers to various facilities: the Melbourne Zoo, the Museum and the National Gallery of Victoria, the Healesville Sanctuary, the State Schools' Nursery, and Sovereign Hill at Ballarat.

NCIS/AISs and State Catholic Commissions / Education Offices collaborate in a range of sub-committees dealing with diverse subjects. The Schools Commission's Planning and Finance Committee in each State deals with allocations of capital grants to non-government schools; it has also been a review body in deciding levels of recurrent funding.

Other joint representation in Victoria includes the Non-Government Committee on 'Participation and Equity', and the Victorian Girls' Schools' Association Council. The CECV is represented on the Registered Schools Board, State Committees on Equal Opportunity in Education, the Advisory Committee on Migrant and Multicultural Education, the In-Service Education Committee, the Soldiers' Children Education Board, the Country Education Project, and a range of Victorian Institute of Secondary Education (VISE) committees.

While recognising this collaboration, it is relevant to note the comment of the late Peter Thwaites in 1975, viz., the danger of consolidation of Catholic organisation upon 'the friendly co-operative relations...between the independent non-Catholic schools and many Catholic schools...which were able to develop because of the wide measure of autonomy of many of the Catholic schools. In so far as there is any reduction of this autonomy, or there is growing preoccupation with purely Catholic affairs, the opportunity for the non-government schools as a whole to develop common ideals and policies may be reduced.'[44]

Within the Catholic 'system'

Tribute should be paid to the effort and efficiency of Catholic Education Offices. The Karmel Committee stated in 1973, 'the Committee was advised by Catholic Education authorities that the governance of parochial schooling was uneven and sometimes weak (6.5)'. As a result, 'grants were made to parochial schools on a systemic basis'. This was also made essential by the necessity for differential recurrent funding of schools because of differing religious to lay staff ratios and, as time has shown, the expansion of the Catholic network.

The expansion of these Offices from 1973 has been rapid from a small base. Transitions have been handled efficiently, even though the numbers in CEO bureaucracies in the bigger States are much smaller than Department of Education staff administering equal government school populations in smaller States. In 1981, for Australia as a whole, enrolments in Catholic schools were 17.9%, the proportion in the ACT being 25.6% and, in South Australia, the lowest, 11.3%. A survey (1984), carried out for CEOV by Dr Brian Spicer of Monash University, has shown that the parents of 7315 grade 6 children (1981) in Melbourne schools sought a continuing Catholic secondary education for them. This was in spite of the burden of fees (felt particularly in the poorer suburbs), distance and accessibility, the shortage of places, the desire for technical education, and dissatisfaction with selection procedures.[45]

It is a far cry from the days when Father Patrick Crudden, director of the Melbourne CEO, was saying in 1971: 'The only realistic step for the Church to take in the 1970s is to work on the assumption that the future of education in Australia rests with the State schools.'[46] Dr Peter Tannock considers the decision of the Labor Government in 1972 to be 'the fateful one. It not only provided the safety net, the rescue net for the non-government sector, but it really consolidated it...'[47] I have tried to show in earlier chapters that Fraser's contribution (prior to 1972) and the impact of Labor's adverse taxation policies (1974) have been underestimated. On the other hand, political events certainly ensured the survival and development of a Catholic 'system'.

One might ask how the bureaucratic structures began and unfolded. During the 1960s, overall policies in primary education had been in the hands of parish priests, and the trustees of religious congregations owned, staffed and financed the secondary schools. Helen Praetz has considered the Victorian picture. I now summarise, from a paper she wrote, four of her seven most critical factors:

> * 'The existence of a leader or leading group given wide authority to devise goals and perform tasks, even where lacking power over others engaged in the enterprise...
>
> * The breakdown or weakening of existing structures or groups so that previously accepted tasks are not performed.
>
> * The generation of a sizeable, and strategically important, unaligned group which does not fit into these eroded structures or groupings.

* The use of financial resources by the leading group to regularise the position of the unaligned group by the establishing of an orderly and predictable career structure, open to the ascent of those who comply with the authority and adhere to the ideology of the leading group. [48]

The 'leading group' was given authority by Justin Simonds, Catholic Archbishop of Melbourne, who believed in centralisation of authority in administrative and financial, as well as spiritual, matters. 'The breakdown or weakening of existing structures' was evident in the numerical decline of religious in teaching congregations, particularly at a time when enrolments were rising. The executives of these congregations recognised the need for change and co-ordination. They showed skill in bridging transitions, including incorporation of 'the unaligned group', viz., lay teachers. Sisters in charge of parish primary schools carried a particularly heavy load. The religious congregations played an important role in the setting-up and initial management / staffing of 'systemic regional' schools, now under 'lay' administration.[49]

Sister Anne McLay, speaking of Queensland, considers that 'the overriding impression to be gained from an analysis of the administrative structures as they currently function at State level is that they do function harmoniously and with a minimum of intrusion on diocesan and Order autonomy.' [50] There have been, of course, throughout Australia, difficult issues of demography, school viability and zoning, co-instruction / co-institutions / co-education, and expansion in school size, which have led to problems. However, differences of opinion or judgment have generally been handled patiently and resolved in good time.

I close, on another note, with two quotations. First, Dr K. McKinnon, who is familiar with Catholic schooling, stated in 1979:

> The historic strength of the individual parish school, both in financial and educational program matters, is giving way to a dependence on central authority for both resources and educational leadership. No doubt, both Governments and the Church will have increasing reason to regret diminution of the former sturdy financial independence of parish schools. [51]

Secondly, B. Brosnan of ATVCSS wrote in 1984: :

> The politicisation of education generally and Catholic education in particular may lead eventually, to the dissolution of Catholic schools as we know them... the apparent debate about funding and equality of educational opportunity is in fact a debate about control. And if the governance of schools is not handed effectively to the Catholic community then control of our schools will pass by default to the State...the operating authorities of Catholic schools are an indirect and lessening political influence whereas parents and teachers constitute a direct political force capable of maintaining the schools.[52]

If the quotations were set for critique in our State and Catholic Teacher Training Colleges, I would enjoy reading the analyses.

## REFERENCES

1. C.E.W. Bean, 'The English public school - and the Australian', Royal Australian Historical Society, Supplement, December, 1951, pp. 211-230, defined 'private schools' as places conducted by their principals for their own profit. Bean cited the Commonwealth Year Book (1946-47, p. 235) which stated: 'The term "private", though popularly applied, is, of course, a misnomer. Schools so often called "private" are properly called "corporate"; not all are "independent" '. In an era where non-government schools receive Government funding, the description may be even more valid.

2. 'A Discussion Paper' by AISNSW (5.8, p. 8) relating to a NCIS/AISV 'Discussion Paper', 10 March, 1978.

3. The Catholic Weekly. 'Campaign against school funds grows: Carrick defends Government decision', 21 July, 1977, quoting Bishop Francis Carroll, chairman, NCEC: 'We did recognise the rights of parents with children attending schools of whatever level... We did maintain, however, that in a non-growth period, any additional recurrent funds should be allocated proportionally across all levels. The Government chose to make another decision with which we do not entirely agree.'

4. Gillies, M. 'Anger growing on school cuts', The Herald, 1 December, 1983.

5. Simper, E. 'What the State Aid war means to battling parents', The Australian, 12-13 November, 1983.

6. Gillies, M. 'Plot to wipe out private schools, says headmaster', The Herald, 13 October, 1983.

7. McKeith, W. 'Intrusions from "outside" add to the burdens of principals', The Australian, 24 January, 1984.

8. In 1983, the Victorian State grant for all non-government school pupils was 23 per cent of costs per government school pupil in the financial year 1982-83.

9. Scarrabelotti, G. 'Church rejects Labor's funding policy', The Catholic Weekly, 20 February, 1983. Mr Hurford had called the CW a 'politically partisan' and 'scurrilous political broadsheet', statements which the Editor disputed in the above issue.

10. Quoted in full in G. Scarrabelotti, 'Commission assesses policies of major parties in poll campaign', The Catholic Weekly, 27 February, 1983.

11. See The Advocate, 'Schools funding: call to protect parents' rights', 29 March, 1984; The Catholic Weekly, 'School funding: students have equal rights to share in resources'; The Catholic Leader, 'NCEC: right of choice must be protected', 1 April, 1984. The lead page from the NCEC's 'Response' to the SC's 1984 'Options for Commonwealth funding of general recurrent resources for Australian schools' carries B 9 and 10 of the NCEC's 'School Funding Policy', November, 1982.

12. Statement signed by eight Australian Catholic bishops, 1 September, 1983. Bishop's concern for education', The Catholic Weekly, 7 September, 1983.

13. Cf. ALP Policy Speech Supplement, 16 February, 1983, from C. Hurford. It refers to 1984 and 1985 only, when those schools 'which chose to stay outside the community standard will have their Commonwealth grants reduced...' An APC document ('Meeting with Mr Hurford on 18 February, 1983') quoted him as saying that the grant in some Group 1 schools would be 'eventually phased out'.

14. Ormonde, T. 'Policies on State Aid a key factor', The Age, 21 February, 1983.

15. Anderson, Joanne. 'State Aid - the great dollar chase', The Sun, 20 December, 1983.

16. Macklin, M. CPD, 2 December, 1983, pp. 3252-3.

17. The Catholic Weekly. Editorial. 'Catholic Weekly's stand vindicated', 20 February, 1983.

18. Scarrabelotti, G. 'Church rejects Labor's funding policy', ibid.

19. Ryan, Susan. CPD, 14 September, 1983, pp. 672-681.

20. West, W. 'Warning to Govt on State Aid issue', The Australian, 21 September, 1983.

21. The Canberra Times. Editorial. 'Education Policy', 8 October, 1983.

22. The Canberra Times. 'Muted response to guidelines: Catholics hold off on school funding', 10 October; 'Catholic at odds over education funding', 11 October, 1983.

23. NCEC. 'Statement from the NCEC to "The Canberra Times"', 12 October, 1983.

24. Doyle, T.M. and J.V. Faulkner, The Canberra Times, 29 October, 1983.

25. Doyle, T.M. and J.V. Faulkner, The Advocate, 24 November (letter), responding to article, 'Schools integration, first steps taken, says paper', 10 November, 1983. See, also, The Catholic Weekly, 'Groundwork laid for schools integration, says critic', 2 November, 1983.

26. Dawkins, J. CPD, 10 November, 1983, p. 2599; D. Simmons, 29 November, 1983, p. 2983.

27. CECV. 'The Catholic Education Office of Victoria - its role and responsibilities', Pivot, vol 8, no. 2, August, 1983.

28. Martin, F.M. The Age, 1 May, 1979; T.M. Doyle, The Age, 13 March, 1982. Cf. CECV Report 1982, p. 10.

29. CECV. 'The Catholic School and Government Funding', Pivot, vol 8, no. 1, April, 1983.

30. Maslen, G. 'Labor school plan would lift fees: Lacy', The Age, 19 February, 1982.

31. Doyle, T.M. The Age, 13 March, 1983.

32. Dyer, A.D.P. The Age, 24 March, 1983.

33. Doyle, T.M. The Age, 25 March, 1983.

34. Comments by CECV, 15 September, 1983, on the State Board of Education 'Report to the Minister of Education on Grants to Non-Government schools for 1984 and 1985', July, 1983.

35. Martin, F.M. The Age, 1 May, 1979.

36. Morey-Nase, G.C. The Age, 3 May, 1979.

37. Willshire, Margaret and Jan McKenzie. The Age, 4 May, 1979.

38. Pastoral Letter from the Bishops of Victoria on Education Matters, 9 October, 1983.

39. Kelly, J. The Age, 17 August, 1983; see, also, the response of six correspondents in Access Age, 18-24 August, 1983.

40. Annett, P. Address to VPC meeting, 16 April, 1984; mimeo for text and tape for answers to questions.

41. The Advocate. 'Few women seek post of principal: survey', 24 May, 1984.

42. Maslen, G. in The Age. 'Survey shows that men still rule Victorian education', 7 September, and 'Equality still long way off', 2 October, 1984.

43. Inch, J. 1974. Melbourne High School and State Secondary Education in Victoria. M. Ed. thesis, University of Melbourne.

44. Thwaites, P. 'Implications of the Schools Commission for non-Catholic Independent Schools' in Allwood (ed), p. 77. The comment should be considered in conjunction with the agenda for a SC meeting with NCEC and NCIS on 18 December, 1984. As stated on my p. 47, 'the

views of NCEC and NCIS run on "parallel lines" '. In the future. this may be read in an extended light. In South Australia, an 'Independent Schools Board' has been in place for about ten years. In other States, schools outside the Catholic sector may find that present Commonwealth Government policies on capital funding and new schools make this type of co-ordination more and more necessary. This does not mean that, at present, all schools would wish to be involved or that the current attitudes of AISs in all States are uniform. Evidence available suggests that Catholic authorities would welcome such moves as assisting joint consultation and planning.

45. Grutzner, Anna. 'Parents hit Catholic school costs', The Herald, 10 July, 1984; G. Reilly, 'Survey shows demand for Catholic education', The Age, 11 July, 1984; 'Parents give full support for Catholic secondary schools' in The Advocate, 12 July, 1984.

46. Grattan, Michelle. 'Catholics lose numbers game', The Age, 26 January, 1971; R.J.W. Selleck. 1970. Crudden: the reluctant rebel.

47. Trinca, Helen. The Australian, 24 April, 1984.

48. Praetz, Helen. 'Birth of a bureaucracy...', Australian and New Zealand Journal of Sociology, 16, no. 1, 1980, p. 24.

49. Praetz's 'Public Policy and Catholic Schools' supplies a short, but comprehensive, treatment of Catholic education - 1945-81. Her 'Building a School System' considers the mechanics of transition and offers 'a picture' of Catholic schools during the pre-Karmel period. As a practitioner in hard-pressed boarding and day schools in the 1950s to mid-1970s, I did not find her treatment informed. Margot O'Neill, 'Layman to lead Catholic fight', The Age, 13 November, 1984, gives a good account of Catholic education today.

50. Sister Anne McLay / Sister Denise Coghlan, W.P. Corkeron, Alan E. Druery/A.R. Thomas. 'Project Catholic "School"'. An excellent summary, Education '84, of Catholic Education in Queensland is to be found in The Catholic Leader, 10 June, 1984.

51. McKinnon, K.R. 'The Schools Commission: policies and politics in a statutory body' in Harman and Smart (eds), p. 147. Cf. H. Praetz, 'The non-government sector in Australian Education' in Browne and Foster (eds), p. 39: 'The alleviation of pressing deficiencies...became administrator's top priority... Local autonomy diminished as the balance of decision-making powers shifted to the metropolitan Catholic Education Offices...'

52. TACS, 'Bernie Brosnan resigns', April, 1984. Cf. P. Lee: 'With the demise of religious teachers...Catholic education will be increasingly Government funded and bureaucratically organised. The full unionisation of Catholic school teachers with industrially guaranteed conditions and the opening up of social and political debate in Catholic schools will represent the final democratisation of Catholic education' (O'Neill, ref 49).

# 6 Parent Organisations

There are parent organisations in both the government and the non-government sectors.

## STATE SCHOOL PARENT ORGANISATIONS

### BACKGROUND

The Victorian Federation of State School Mothers' (now Parents') Clubs (VFSSMC, VFSSPC) represents the interests of parents with children in government schools. Mrs Joan Kirner, now a Labor member of the Victorian Legislative Council, and Mrs Pat Reeve, currently full-time member of the State Board of Education, are both past presidents of VFSSMC.

VICCSO, the Victorian Council of State School Organisations, represents the interests of school councils. It is true that, prior to 1975, when neither teachers nor students were eligible for membership of school committees and advisory councils, VICCSO had a strong claim to express the views of parents. This is now the responsibility of VFSSPC. The two organisations have a long history of dedication to the State school cause and see their roles as complementary.

There is increasing association of the Australian Council (ACSSO) and the Australian Teachers' Federation (ATF), and between VICCSO / VFSSPC and the Victorian teacher organisations. Van Davy, president of the ATF, noted in an address (1983) to VFSSPC: 'I am informed that there is a reasonably high degree of unity between the three teacher unions and the parent and school council organisations which, it has always seemed to me, is a necessary pre-condition for successful political action in the arena of education.'[1] In 1982, Anthony Ketley, president. of ACSSO, stated: 'There's a very large middle ground where we see eye to eye with the ATF.'[2]

During 1979 and 1980, in particular, there were heated instances of combined parent - teacher action in Victorian primary and secondary schools. The disputes originated in the transfer of teachers 'in excess', according to departmental staffing formulae. Opposition (1983) to the building of Radford College in the ACT had its genesis in the combined protests of the ACT's Teachers' Federation, the Council of Parents' and Citizens' Associations, and the Trades and Labour Council, to the proposed closure of Watson High School and some primary schools.

### PARENT RIGHTS

According to Joan Kirner, president of ACSSO from 1975 to 1978, parent participation in schooling is important for the following reasons:

* Parents are the first educators and continue to educate.
* Parents have the long-term responsibility for their children.
* Research and experience demonstrate that parent participation in children's learning increases the chances of a child's success in education.

* Parents, as citizens, have the right to participate in shaping the social institutions (such as schools).

* Democratic governments, to be effective, require the participation of electors in decisions which go beyond the formal decisions of whom to elect and who shall govern. [3]

## FUNDING POLICIES

It is unfortunate that these excellent principles have not been applied to the parents of all children. In fact, Mrs Kirner is even critical of 'needs' policies - as applied to non-government schools. She has stated: 'We know that needs policies can be bastardised by even a group as honest as the Schools Commission. It seems to me that there is a very big debate about the essential principles of public and private education, about what kind of education funding serves the common good, about the role of government, to service the common good or just the individual choice.' [4] The Schools Commission has not been exemplary in asking and pursuing the right questions, particularly 'parent equity'; and Mrs Kirner obviously wishes to impose her interpretation of 'the common good'.

The policies of ACSSO and its affiliates are limited to the welfare of children in government schools and discriminate against parents / children in the non-government sector. For example, a resolution of the 1969 national conference stated: 'That State and Federal Governments' contributions to non-State schools be terminated until such time as the needs of the States' public schools and colleges have been met in full.' [5] In 1973, ACSSO only accepted the Interim Committee's funding of non-government schools 'under protest'.[6] Marion Harper, a VICCSO executive member, reports that 'VICCSO parents at the 1982 annual conference supported almost unanimously a resolution of total opposition to the continuation of State Aid to private schools'.[7]

In spite of its 'hard-line', ACSSO has collaborated with the Australian Parents' Council in a Schools Commission national survey of parent opinion regarding the education of girls (1979). [8] Furthermore, collaboration between representatives of the government and non-government sectors has been closer because of contact as members of the Schools Commission. Where there are deficiencies in reports, they can be traced, in great part, to the fact that commissioners differ on fundamentals; one cannot expect that 'solutions' based on compromise will show consistency. The public level of debate is low, largely due to lack of critiques from academics.[9]

## THE AUSTRALIAN PARENTS' COUNCIL

The APC, with its Parents' and Friends' Federations or State Parents' Councils as affiliates in each State, the ACT and the Northern Territory, describes itself as 'a national voice for parents in the field of education in Australia'. The original federations had Catholic origins and traditions, but no desire to claim status as Catholic organisations or to further Catholic interests as such. In Victoria and NSW, there is a balance of Catholic and non-Catholic parents in the one body. In South

Australia and Tasmania, there are separate associations, 'Catholic' and 'Independent', affiliated with the APC. The somewhat newer Independent School (non-Catholic) parent federations in Queensland and Western Australia are in contact with the APC, but are not yet affiliates.

The objects of the Council are: 'To safeguard the rights and promote the interests of parents and children in the field of education in Australia and, in particular, the rights and interests of parents availing or wishing to avail themselves of the services of non-government schools for their children.' [10]

The APC has defended the right of choice and of greater involvement of parents in the government sector through: a reduction of departmental centralisation; an increase in the information parents are given as to the content of the curriculum; their participation in the administration and welfare of the government school which the child attends; and the right and protection of the child from coercive zoning measures.

Relevant clauses in the 1972 Statement of Policy read: Parents 'should take an active role in the education of their children and should not abdicate their responsibility to the State, nor abdicate it entirely to the school of their choice...should seek to foster active and intelligent co-operation with the schools of their choice.' The APC, therefore, is diametrically opposed to the view of an English academic, Professor F. Musgrove: 'It is the business of education in our social democracy to eliminate the influence of parents on the life chances of the young.'[11] Such principles are based on a concept of 'child rights' exclusively and the claims of academic 'experts' to determine what is good for the child. [12] Few educationalists would be prepared to go so far, but many subscribe, in part at least, and act on this basis.

The APC has welcomed the statement in 3.18 (x) of the Schools Commission's Draft Report: *Target Recurrent Resource Standards Study*, February, 1984:

> Since parents are primarily responsible for the nurturing of their children, they should be well-informed about and involved very closely in decisions about the organisational structure, program and ethos of the schools which their children attend. In order to ensure that schools reflect the needs of students and the wishes of parents, as many decisions about their operations should be taken at the school-level as possible. [13]

The best way to show respect for parents is to give them responsibility in key educational tasks. Some Catholic schools, e.g., St Teresa's Primary School, Brighton, South Australia, have developed programs which enable parents to work with children in small groups to consolidate concepts and skills the teacher has already introduced. [14] While State school parents are also willing to make sacrifices, there may be greater difficulty in incorporating them in school structures. [15]

## FUNDING POLICIES AND PARENT RIGHTS

The APC's policy with respect to funding is that it should be based on the right of the child to an approved basic education, with extra consideration for 'disadvantage'. It has never accepted the practice of (or, rather, has denied the lack of clear principles involved in) categories (A to H) - as introduced from 1 January, 1974 and continued with the name of levels (1 to 6), then groups (1 to 3), now categories again.

As the APC stated in its Response to the Schools Commission's *Report for the Triennium 1982-84*, p. 5: 'This Council would like to see further moves by the government towards the complete phasing out of categorisation of schools, which this Council has always considered to be unjust, divisive, and discriminatory...'

Such statements have been interpreted as a rejection of the concept of 'needs'. They are not. The position of the APC, and its affiliate the Victorian Parents Council (VPC) is best set out in Resolution 6 from the APC Annual Conference, 1973: 'This Conference applauds many of the proposals as contained in the Report of the Interim Committee for the Australian Schools Commission, has reservations towards some, but totally rejects those sections which provide for the abolition of per pupil subsidies in the non-government sector and which place only non-government non-systemic schools into categories.' [16]

Why? Because of the abrogation of a fundamental right:

* some children have been denied any contribution to the recurrent cost of their education. (1.i)
* the needs of children have been determined by reference only to the schools they attend rather than the circumstances of the child. (1.iii)
* in that parents who have made special monetary provision for the education of their children are to be penalised. (2.iv)

As Margaret Slattery, secretary of the APC, has written: 'Genuine choice is available only if there are real alternatives and if parents are not penalised for their choice... For some years demand has been growing for non-government schooling with a growing band of parents queueing for non-existent places in non-government schools.' [17]

Margaret Gartland, currently President of the Victorian Parents' Council, continued to write in similar terms. In particular, she attempted to get the rights of all children to educational funding written into Victorian legislation - to 'provide legal protection'.[18]

However, her emphases have won little recognition in political, academic, or even non-government official circles; nor has her stress on 'Children - Not Schools'. [19] Various schools have, of course, acute disabilities in respect to available recurrent funds, shortages of equipment, facilities and grounds. This correlates generally with the difficult financial situation of the average parent with children at such schools, and this is the theoretical basis of non-government school 'needs-based' funding.

Relations between the VPC and AISV have always been good and contact has increased in recent years. Where in the 1960s, the VPC's member schools were mainly Catholic, a high proportion of its 1983 membership (128 schools enrolling some 100,000 children) were non-Catholic affiliates of AISV.

Hogan has noted: 'The interests of administrators in the CEO are neither ideologically nor pragmatically the same as those of Catholic parents.' [20] The stress of the VPC on parent rather than school-based funding has been the cause of tension between the Melbourne Office of the CEOV and the VPC during the last decade. In this context, Fr Williams, Tasmanian and chairman of the NCEC, has stated: 'I believe that with the introduction of the "Karmel" categories in 1974, Catholic schools, Bishops and Catholic Education Office personnel moved away from the 'equal per capita' both in practice and policy. A number of the parent groups still hold fast to this policy and thus a real tension exists between some parent groups and the "official" Church position.' [21] On the contrary, the APC and its affiliates may be closer to the Bishops directives than some personnel in CEOs. Also, criticism of 'needs' based policies because they are not parent-based does not mean adherence to equal grants. This was not APC policy in the early 1970s, even before Karmel! Finally, any tension with the Catholic education authorities has been in some, but certainly not all States or dioceses, and to varying degrees.

## CATHOLIC MOTHERS' AND PARENTS' CLUBS

The Victorian Federation of Catholic Mothers' Clubs and Parents' Associations is a parallel organisation to the Victorian Parents' Council. Unlike the VPC, it has worked within Catholic structures. Its activity has been centred on issues concerned with the material and personal welfare of the children and the quality of life in Catholic schools. It has encouraged parents to take an active part in school affairs, but has not concerned itself with political matters. Nevertheless, recent concern is evident in a strongly worded lead letter published in *The Age*. Denise Reeves, the chairperson of the Education Committee, stated that the Federation believed that 'the proposed reduction of financial aid to a large number of Protestant independent schools' is undemocratic; that 'Senator Susan Ryan's new capital funding directive is disturbing'; and that recommendations of the State Board of Education, by denying funding to increased enrolments showed 'extreme bias'. [22]

## THE POLITICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF PARENT ORGANISATIONS

There has been some divergence of opinion among scholars as to the political thrust, from 1962 to 1984, of parent organisations from the government/non-government sectors. Smart considers that 'the Bishops seemed more effective than most Catholic parent groups in influencing politicians during the early 1960s'. [23] On the other hand, Bessant and Spaull state: 'In conjunction with the Democratic Labor Party in parliament these groups were most successful in influencing the federal and state governments.'[24] I consider that the latter statement is a better judgment, but there was also strength in the uniform submission from bishops, parent groups, and the DLP; B.A. Santamaria's clarity of argument is another aspect to be considered.

An *Age* supplement (1973) stated of VFSSMC that 'under the able presidency of former secondary school teacher Mrs Joan Kirner, the federation has moved away from its "cake-baking and fund-raising" image and has become a major pressure group on the State education scene'.[25] As Bessant and Spaull have noted, 'the Karmel report threw the advocates of state aid into disarray and revitalised the state school organisations'.[26] The latter certainly moved with confidence after 1973 and, in both 1976 and 1977, parents and teachers identified with the State schools mounted effective 'E-Day' rallies in Canberra. Earlier chapters have suggested, and Chapter 9 will expand the thesis that, since 1973, there have been deep divisions in the non-government school community and among Catholics. Chapters 18 to 21 show that these tensions were exacerbated during 1983.

However, I consider that Bessant and Spaull, who wrote in 1976, exaggerate division within the Australian Parents' Council and its affiliates. It did not extend beyond the Federation of Catholic Parents' and Friends' Associations, Archdiocese of Sydney - as discussed in Chapter 3; this body now seems to concur in APC policies.[27]

## COMMUNITY STANDARD

To discuss the response of parents in late 1983 to Senator Ryan's 1984 Guidelines, particularly the reduction of grants to 41 schools in Group 1, demands consideration of the concept of 'community standard' in education.

While there are needs for schools as such, there are also needs for families which make sacrifices to give their children a good education; they were penalised in 1974 and, in 1984, by both Commonwealth and Victorian State Labor Governments. Parents who send their children to schools which exceed the community schooling standard have done so at the risk of uncertain expenditure. It does not need imagination, just logical capacity, to see the result of the exercise. Low income earners who could not meet the strain withdrew their children and exposed them to the difficulties associated with school transfer, while high income earners were able to adjust. If schools became more elitist, their critics were able to bolster their case. Meanwhile, parents with similar income and responsibilities in low fee schools were not affected.

What is the basis for 'community standard' theory? It is, perhaps, most simply expressed by Senator Ryan in an interview: 'If they can offer all that, they should be prepared to tolerate a bit of a reduction in Commonwealth funds so that the kids at the other end of the scale, be they in government or non-government schools can have a few more opportunities.[28]

Is it suggested that every Labor Parliamentarian (serving or retired), and every staff member or bureaucrat appointed because of his/her political connections, has a life style and/or financial resources at the community standard - never above? One can admit claims based on relativities, duties of state, etc., but well-heeled people (with fat allowances), who use the thesis of 'community standards' in education against parents paying high fees, generally pride themselves on being egalitarians! And, if the well-to-do, including parliamentarians with wives in highly paid positions, save by sending their children to government schools, why should they not 'be prepared to tolerate a bit' of a contribution to help 'the kids at the other end of the scale'.

It is, at least, necessary to try for total fairness. As a recent *Age* editorial stated: 'It would certainly be fairer, but probably administratively impracticable, to means-test parents rather than schools in the disbursement of "State aid".'[29] Let us not use the word 'probably' until the matter is examined professionally; the expertise is there, but the will is lacking. Forell has stated that, in its Discussion Paper of 1978, the Schools Commission 'pointed out that means-testing of parents would be administratively difficult and costly and more open to evasion and abuse than direct grants to schools'.[30] This is certainly not true if the taxation system is involved.

I understand the difficulty of finding a practicable solution, the pressure for pragmatism, the necessity for finding a consensus in which a just cause gains here and yields a little there. However, I cannot respect those who will not state a problem comprehensively and, at least, work towards an outcome that gives justice to all. It is necessary to ask the right questions and to avoid the plague of our era - one 'dimensional' thinking.

In addition, another 'youth' activity - the Army component of the Australian Cadet Corps - has been treated shabbily with the application of 'community standard' theory. Arbitrary decisions without real consultation, and poor planning, in Canberra have created difficulties and expense for units with fine records. A strangely named category - 'limited support' - offers little and has placed heavy financial burdens on the 23 school units - State and non-government - which continue in Victoria. While issue stores and equipment - almost entirely clothing items - will be 'written-off', i.e., retained by Units without cost, the schools will have to pay for replacement items. In Victoria, all school have been placed in the 'limited support' category, i.e., none are classified as 'disadvantaged' which gives entitlement to full support. The basis for decision is unknown and appears to be unsound.

## NEW NON-GOVERNMENT SCHOOL PARENT ORGANISATIONS

In 1983, the decisions of Senator Susan Ryan, the Commonwealth Minister for Education, and the recommendations of the State Board of Education, Victoria, produced a backlash among parents. New organisations sprung up spontaneously, hired halls, and took the initiative from the traditional bodies.

## 'CONCERNED PARENTS' IN NSW

When the 'Concerned Parents on non-government schools in NSW' appeared overnight, they hired the Sydney Town Hall for 7 November,1983, and invited august figures from Bob Hawke down. The NSW Parents' Council and the Association of Independent Schools of NSW were drawn in, so that the meeting was launched with their 'support'. It was a great success, attracting 5000 to hear Margaret Slattery and Monica Turner, with Senators Baume and Harradine.[31]

Senator Ryan had refused to attend an earlier meeting of parents in Albury or to send a representative, because the issue was a 'delicate matter'.[32] She was not available for the Sydney meeting and later claimed that it was a 'political exercise'.[33] She was concerned that the majority attending were 'alarmed by fallacious and mischievous interpretations' of Government policy.[34] She stated that the Government was being 'subjected to melodramatic nonsense' and warned that 'anti- government rallies' would not sway the government from its policy.[35] She was not incorrect in judging that the meeting sought to influence its political masters and mistresses. However, she was wrong in claiming that it was a 'very highly organised campaign'. I was in Sydney in late October, 1983, and it was amusing to note that it was much the reverse.

The 'Concerned Parents' were, basically, protesting against discrimination in education between the government and non-government sectors. As John Doyle wrote: 'Government responses...seem to ignore the point...whether or not all Australian children have a right to aid according to their families' means, independently of the kind of school they attend.'[36]

## 'ACE' AND 'PEAL' IN VICTORIA

Similar activity occurred in Victoria where 'Action Committee on Education' (ACE) and 'Private Education Assistance Lobby' (PEAL) arranged meetings which were attended by large numbers. As in Sydney, these organisations have risen spontaneously from parents who, as one said to me, 'wanted to do something'.

In the words of Robert Read, then secretary of ACE, now assistant secretary of the VPC, its aim was to restore the real level of Federal and State funding to the value existing at the beginning of 1983. ACE was essentially a one-issue organisation. It encouraged the formation of groups in electorates, letter writing to the media, contact with politicians, and communication of the issues to local residents. ACE drew on a small membership, but larger than that of PEAL; it sought to be apolitical.

PEAL comprised a group of parents and individuals concerned at the funding cuts and dedicated to 'the maintenance of an independent schooling system' and 'the equitable distribution of our "education dollars"'. It encouraged parents to explain the facts, sign petitions, write letters, and urge school councils to fight.

The Chairman, Tim Todhunter, of a PEAL meeting at Malvern Town Hall, Melbourne, on 27 October, 1983, stated that letters to Mr Fordham, State Minister of Education, and Mr Cain, the Labor Premier, had not been answered and that approaches to the Federal Government had not elicited a nominee to speak on its behalf. Senator Ryan was absent overseas on this occasion, but she initially refused or ignored invitations to attend non-government school parent meetings with the exception of a meeting held in Ballarat on 22 November where she told parents 'what we need is patience, trust and honesty'.[37]

PEAL had also invited Senator Ryan for 5 December and when, in November, she advised her willingness to attend, a public meeting was hastily arranged. The other main speakers were Senator Baume and Bishop John Kelly, Catholic auxiliary of Melbourne. There were 1200 in the Malvern Town Hall, and the writer was one of 1000 standing outside on an oval, the grandstand of which held TV screens. The people inside did provide some 'private heckling' for the Minister , but the crowd outside was quiet, and there was no ground for her saying that they were there 'to undermine public confidence in the Hawke Government'.[38] For an *Age* reporter, 'the school pantomime season opened with another performance of 'The Private School Funding Saga'.[39] Nicholson produced a snide cartoon on 7 December, with a cleaner saying to a colleague, 'They're right you know, and I'm going to send my kids to Geelong Grammar'.[40] On 10 December, *The Age* published a letter which stated: ' For some time now it has been apparent to me that your newspaper has a completely unreal and irrational bias against independent schools. The report (6/12) was not only offensively unfunny but also couched in terms so as to present the concerned parents in attendance in a most unfavourable light. Does your cartoonist know how many parents keep their children at independent schools by doing menial jobs such as cleaning, etc.?'[41]

What was more significant was what the speakers said.[42] Bishop Kelly stated to Senator Ryan: 'You will not concede, nor will the Labor Party, such a thing as a right.' When asked specifically from the floor who was the official spokesperson for the Catholic Church, he replied: 'If it comes to a showdown, I have got to say this: it's not what any Catholic Education Office says, it's what the Bishops say that counts.' Senator Baume claimed that the 'open agenda' of the Labor Party and its teacher / parent organisation supporters was clear: 'Their goals are, first, to contain the non-government school system and prevent its expansion ; second, to impoverish part of the sector - to drive people out by economic deprivation; third, to create an atmosphere of bad will towards private schools over State-aid issues; and fourth, to move steadily towards setting up an environment in which the integration of schools becomes more likely.'

Mrs Gartland made the following points: 'If one child is considered to have no right to such support, then no one has... Public funds are collected from all citizens and, irrespective of whether State or Commonwealth do the spending, the ownership of public funds stays with the people of Australia. Governments are simply trustees of that money and have an obligation to see to its equitable distribution on behalf of all Australians.' Towards the end of the meeting, Senator Ryan accepted the fact that 'there is genuine concern about people being given enough support to be able to exercise their right to choose'.

There was nothing to justify the comment of John Dawkins in the House of Representatives two days later: 'This is a campaign of extremists. It is an hysterical campaign which refuses to recognise that the vast majority of kids at non-government schools will do better under the policies of this Government than they did under the policies of the last Government.'[43] On the contrary, one could claim that it was the Government response which showed lack of restraint and reasoned defence. I also doubt the accuracy of his statement: 'People in non-government schools are sick and tired of the fact that the gap between the richest and the poorest non-government schools got wider and wider under the policies of the former Government.'[44] They are more concerned at discriminatory treatment towards people - of average, or little above average income, and no savings - with children in Group 1 schools; and poor fee-paying parents whose 'need' gets inadequate recognition from Federal and, in particular, State Governments.

The general attitude of independent school and parent bodies was to consider the development and activities of ACE and PEAL as a natural evolution and to regard them as having a role to play during the crisis. On the other hand, the established organisations, and schools where parents have become active in expressing their concern to politicians, were initially apprehensive that the newcomers might develop separately, compete for membership, and espouse different policies. This did not happen. In April, 1984, the membership of ACE, recognising the role, policies, and activity since 1959, of the Victorian Parents' Council, and its linkage with the national Australian Parents' Council, decided to join the VPC.

The Victorian branch of the ALP has shown little respect for the standing of the Victorian Parents' Council in the non-government school community. R.W. Deany, the VPC's president in 1982 stated: 'Unsuccessful efforts made in 1980 to meet the State ALP Leader and the Shadow Minister of Education were again fruitless in 1981.'[45] A meeting took place with Mr Fordham before the 1982 State election, but requests for further interviews were not granted until 8 August, 1983, when he gave a brief and incomplete summary of the recommendations of the report (29 July) of the State Board; see Chapter 27. The report was tabled and accepted in Parliament on 9 August.

A VPC deputation met again with Mr Fordham in March, 1984, and he spoke at the seminar, 'Freedom of choice in education', arranged by the VPC on 16 April, 1984. When a questioner asked why parents were not represented on the Minister's committee (September, 1983) on non-government school funding, he said that the VPC had sought 'representation on appropriate Government bodies and investigations that are seen to be affecting non-government schools. I undertook to take that request on board and to get back to the VPC.'[46] There has been no further discussion as at 11 March, 1985.

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10. APC. Statement of Policy, August, 1972.

11. Musgrove, F. The Family, Education and Society, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1966, quoted in Beales et al (eds), p. 35. Cf. G.K. Chesterton in What's wrong with the world. 1910. (London: Cassell): 'When I say we should instruct our children, I mean that we should do it, not that Mr Sully or Professor Barnes should do it (p. 204). Many a school boasts of having the last ideas on education when it has not even the first idea... There must be an educational specialist *in loco parentis* (but not) *contra parentem* (p. 245).

Cf. Mrs Joan Fry at a UNICEF conference, 13 August, 1978: 'By the time children start school, they have acquired attitudes about themselves and about the world which affect their response to school. If their ideas are reinforced and expectations formed, then schools may be seen as a natural extension of their home and family life. If not, they are, at least, likely to be confused and, at worst, disoriented in a world they do not understand.'; and W. Moore: 'If the home is antagonistic or even neutral, the child is very much at risk...' (Jane Richardson, 'Saintly path to a "revolution"', The Australian, 21 January, 1981).

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21.Williams, J. Opening Address, 24 September, 1981, to the Canberra Congress: 'Catholic Education in the 1980s'.

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25. 'A-Z to schooling'. An Age Supplement, 26 February, 1973.

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27. Cf. Press Release from Catholic Parents' and Friends' Associations of Sydney, 22 February, 1983.

28. Gray, W. 'Those painful schools', The Herald, 15 March, 1984.

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30. Forell, C. 'State aid: a high risk change', The Age, 14 December, 1983. Most non-government schools make fee concessions for various reasons. There has been some discussion on non-government schools effecting their own means-testing by differential fees. The success of such ventures provides no precedent and no substitute for provision of equity for all parents.

31. Perkin, I. 'Hawke's big victory on uranium...but state aid issue gains new fire', The Australian, 8 November, 1983.

32. Baume, P. CPD, 19 October, 1983, p. 1723; 9 November, 1983, p. 2378. Senator Ryan soon got over her first shock(s) and attended later meetings where she conducted herself with equanimity. On 9 November, 1983, she tabled in the Senate ' a list of meetings that I have had with a very wide range of non-government school organisations... in the past few months'.

33. Perkin, I. 'Ryan forced to defend school funds policy in Caucus', The Australian, 9 November, 1983.

34. Ryan, Susan. CPD, 9 November, 1983, p. 2374.

35. Peterson, Ellen. 'Protests over state aid to schools won't sway us, says Ryan', The Australian, 10 November, 1983.

36. Doyle, J.W. The Australian, 15 November, 1983.

37. Lockwood, K. 'Applause not boos, for Ryan at state aid meeting', The Australian, 23 November, 1983. Cf. The Courier (Ballarat) of the same date: 'The loudest applause at last night's meeting on education funding was given to non-government speakers...the applause clearly indicated the mood of the meeting.'

38. Malon, Georgie. 'A private heckling', The Sun, and M. Gillies, 'Schools in for heckling', The Herald, 6 December, 1983.

39. Fih, Barbara. 'Ryan gets the "baddie" treatment', The Age, 6 December, 1983.

40. The Age is noted for its cartoons depicting and/or denigrating non-government schools funding and is unique in this respect. $ bills are a prominent feature; see Nicholson, 2 August, 1983. Subjects like university entrance also attract attention; e.g., Tandberg with his favourite 'racing eight', 9 June, and Nicholson, 3 August, 1983. During 1982-83, the ATF's The Australian Teacher reproduced nine of Tandberg's cartoons. Cf. T. Duggan, 'What they think of that man Tandberg', The Age, 29 September, 1984, and L.Carlyon, 'When the felt pen is mightier', The Herald, 1 October, 1984; also, see letters to The Age, 1 & 12, June, 1984.

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# 7 State School Teacher Organisations

## INTRODUCTION

In Victoria during the closing years of the 1960s, teacher unions in the government sector showed increasing militancy, initially exerting pressure in the secondary and technical areas of education. Disaffection then extended to the Victorian Teachers' Union (Primary) which had a reputation for moderation and co-operation with the State Education Department.

In the non-government sector, teacher associations - whatever their origin and character - have been regarded as traditionally conservative. However, it is relevant to consider (in Chapter 8) militancy in the history of Catholic teacher unionism in NSW and Victoria in the 1960s (when wage structures were low) and, today, when teachers in Catholic schools have attained or are moving towards parity with teachers generally. There is now linkage with militant federations outside the Catholic sector.

## STATE SCHOOL UNIONS IN VICTORIA

* The Victorian Teachers' Union (VTU), represents primary school teachers. In 1973, and indeed to the present day, it has been the largest and the least militant union. The VTU engaged in the first strike in its 50-year history in 1974 over a salary issue. The history of those factors producing moderation in the VTU during the 1960s and, later, the development of Socialist Left influence in the 1970s is an interesting story. For various reasons, it will not be developed herein.

The VTU president, Jim Young, has sought redistribution of 'funds back to Government schools away from wealthy private schools that are fleecing the public purse'.[1] Writing in *The Teachers Journal* (March, 1984), the official journal of the VTU, Peter Lord, deputy president, stated: 'While governments transfer such massive amounts of money away from public schools, those public schools, particularly primary schools, remain severely under-resourced in terms of buildings, needs-based staffing, equipment grants, operating funds, education allowances, support services, etc.'[2]

* The Victorian Secondary Teachers' Association (VSTA) has frequently resorted to strikes and taken an aggressive stance on issues - class sizes; conditions of work and anomalies; 'needs' staffing (flowing from high migrant enrolments, poor buildings, handicapped children and socio-economic factors); teachers in 'excess'; unsettling transfers; limited tenure ('the employment of temporary teachers to meet temporary needs'); stand-down provisions; control by 'staff representatives' rather than principals; freedom from visits by inspectors of the Department - that it identifies with the good of State school education.

As is clearly presented in *Year 12* (March, 1984) by David McRae, assistant secretary, the VSTA has, since 1965, been opposed to the external and 'competitive exam system'; since 1974 to 'assessment procedures which rank students'. Since 1968, it has supported school-based curricula. In the background to these policies is objection to the control exercised by universities through their entry requirements; and to the influence of Year 12 demands on assessment throughout the whole of secondary education. There is 'concern about gender, ethnic and social class biases in the groups which benefit from the HSC process' (pp. 4-6). VSTA policy for many years has been totally opposed to streaming' (p. 12). *Year 12* supplies a valuable summary of HSC subjects, student assessment and VSTA proposals for change; see, also, Chapter 26.

* The Technical Teachers' Union of Victoria (TTUV) has been a militant union, at times under Communist leadership. Unlike the VTU and the VSTA, most of the TTUV's members have an industrial background in the trades or crafts. The TTUV has favoured the concept of more academic work in the first few years before specialising in technical training. It has supported the dismantling of the divisional structure of education - primary, secondary and technical - in favour of the 'post-primary' comprehensive school.

It is inevitable that legitimate grievances will occur among the 52,000 teachers in government schools, with some 26,000 members of unions. However, the grievances that provided battlegrounds have sometimes been ill-founded, initiated by hard-line membership and executives, a cause of intense divisions in many staffs, associated with harassment of non-conforming union members or non-members, and fatal to the immediate welfare of students.[3]

The Teachers' Tribunal set up in 1946 as an independent body to determine salaries, classifications and conditions of service was a constant source of friction. The unions claimed that their representative was isolated in the face of the Government representative and the 'independent' chairman; their leadership was committed to the destruction of the Tribunal. Little credit has been given to the benefits accruing to the Teaching Service during the years of arbitration. These included removal of the determination of salaries and conditions from the whims of the Government in power.

The VSTA, TTUV, and VTU are members of the Victorian Trades Hall Council, which has given them support in issues on staffing and funding. These matters have not been part of Council debates recently as they have been negotiated more directly with the Cain Government elected in 1982. In July, 1984, the three teacher unions combined in the 'Teachers' Federation of Victoria', a step that had been encouraged by the State Government which welcomed 'one industry, one union'. The Federation has sought recognition before the Victorian Teaching Service Conciliation and Arbitration Commission as the union representing all teachers. This action precludes any other organisations from representing minority groups and opens the way to 'compulsory unionism'.

*The Victorian Teacher* is published jointly by the VSTA and the TTUV. The VTU's *Teachers' Journal* has been retitled *The VTU Journal*, a significant change.

* The Victorian Teachers' Federation (VTF) was formed in 1976 because of dissatisfaction with the militant policies of the other unions. It has, currently, about 2500 members, covers all types of schools and is concerned with both educational and industrial issues. The foundation originated in the collaboration of Bernard Smith, 'a conservative Catholic' and Lucy Meo, a left of centre ALP member, a teacher of history, and an agnostic.[4]

While the VTF's opinions and activity are known through the press, it has been excluded from teacher union / government deliberations, and attempts to enter the Trades Hall Council have been 'stonewalled'.[5] This has applied under both Liberal and Labor Governments, which have acceded to protests and pressures from the three other unions. Jim Young, the president of the VTU, has indicated that 'the three unions' are not well disposed towards industrial representations from 'splinter teacher unions or Mickey Mouse teacher associations'.[6] This hostility and exclusion from negotiations has been a significant factor, leading members of the VTF to seek federal registration and power to negotiate their own awards.

Mrs Meo notes that 'sectarian feelings may still be evoked with comparative ease in people in whom it might have been least suspected'. She claims: 'The ATF is the spiritual centre and the totem pole of those in the government teacher unions who, out of a variety of motivations, would like to destroy the private school system as such'. It is interesting that she finds more virulence in other States, particularly NSW, than in Victoria. 'The Victorian unions' hearts do not appear to be in it. First there has been internal unfavourable reaction from many of their members who...send their children to non-government schools... Secondly, they are doing very nicely so far out of the Victorian Labor Government, so could have little desire to disturb the nice balance. Thirdly, the other Victorian teacher unions have a more important matter to attend to, i.e., to pursue with greater success their policy of eliminating the Victorian Teachers' Federation.'[7]

Other commentators would see the Victorian unions as being a little more active in attempting to forestall any State-Aid benefits! For example, the three unions have agreed that 'there should be no registration of new private schools in 1984 and 1985, in order to allow time for full consideration of longer term proposals and for the development of impact study procedures'.[8] In a May, 1984 'Budget Submission' to the Victorian Government, 'The Three Teacher Unions' Public Education Funding Campaign' called for cuts in per capita grants to 1982-83 levels, withdrawal of education allowances to the parents of private school parents' (which are available in equal amount to State school parents), for cuts in 'many other private schools subsidies', and for discontinuance of aid to 'elite schools'. The unions also desired that 'private' schools should be charged 'payroll tax' which is, for some strange reason, listed (as a book entry only) for government schools, but is not used in calculating their costs![9]

## STATE AID AND THE NSW TEACHERS' FEDERATION

In NSW, according to an editorial in the *Sydney Sun*, 'the increasing left bias of the Teachers' Federation leaders, their militance, willingness to strike and to spend big money to gain objectives...remove any doubt that our children's classrooms have been turned into a political battlefield.'[10] When Max Taylor, the militant president of the NSWTF, was defeated by Ivan Pagett, a member of the ALP's centre unity group, in the elections of November, 1983, he claimed his defeat was brought about by teachers opposed to his anti-State aid policy.[11] He was certainly guilty of what is called 'Left Deviationism' in Communist circles, i.e., outstripping the revolutionary momentum of the proletariat or, in the language of democracy, getting out of touch with the electorate.[12] B.A. Santamaria admitted the role of the National Civic Council, but claimed that 'the point to note is not the NCC contribution, but the fact that a sizeable majority of teachers voted for the new team'.[13]

*The Australian Financial Review* has not been a great defender of the non-government school system, as is evident from an editorial ('Who pays for whose education?') of 10 November, 1982. This makes its evaluation, following a strike of the NSWTF, all the more interesting. A recent editorial ('Sabotaging the public schools', 6 July, 1984) stated:

> They have taken over the old sectarian controversy about State aid to Catholic schools, and turned it into an ideological battle against any schools not within the system in which they have achieved such sway... It is not that the public school system cannot be improved. But the teachers are unwilling to accept that it can be improved in any rational fashion. They simply demand more money, more expenditure and a greater degree of monopoly for the public system... Education is a vital element of our society. It is important that the quality of the public school system, which will always be the larger part of the school system, should be as high as possible. This requires that it be subject to competition, that parents have a choice, and that it be funded adequately with proper public accountability and checks upon the performance of teachers within it.

## THE AUSTRALIAN TEACHERS' FEDERATION

The Australian Teachers' Federation represents teachers in government schools at the national level. It has affiliates in all States, including the NSWTF and the three members of the newly formed Teachers' Federation of Victoria; the Victorian Teachers' Federation (VTF) is not affiliated with the ATF.

The president of the ATF for 1984 is Van Davy. His career has been summarised by Senator Ryan: 'In 1973, Van Davy was a teacher at Allandale Primary School. He founded the inner-city education alliance, and helped prepare an extensive submission to the Interim Committee of the Schools Commission, chaired by Peter Karmel. Van Davy was later appointed to the NSW Disadvantaged Schools Committee and in 1978 became a full-time consultant to the NSW Department of Education on the Disadvantaged Schools Program. Van is now a member of the Schools Commission.' [14]

In April, 1984, Davy claimed that 'for the first time in the history of the Federation, every teachers' union is now talking with one voice' on the issue of State Aid.[15] The 1984 annual conference of the ATF condemned State Aid to independent schools, but supported the right of Aboriginal communities to maintain their own cultural and religious traditions by owning and determining the character of their own schools. The Queensland Teachers' Union was the only one to oppose this motion as inconsistent with the national Federation's policy of opposing aid to non-government schools.[16]

An executive declaration of the ATF, carried unanimously in March, 1984, seeks a moratorium on State Aid with three elements: 'a complete freeze to present levels of grants, except for the previously promised systematic withdrawal of funds from Level 1(a) Government - subsidised schools; no 'additional Commonwealth subsidies to new private schools (recurrent or capital) and on any new places in presently subsidised private schools; a demand for the maintenance of total effort - 'contributed services' and 'private inputs'.[17] The demand for a 'moratorium' or 'freeze' - as a minimum - from 1985 to 1987 has been re-iterated by Davy on the ABC television program *Pressure Point*, 28 June, 1984.

## COMPETITION IN REGISTERING A NATIONAL UNION

On 3 November, 1983, the VTF lodged an application for registration of the 'Teachers Association of Australia (TAA)' seeking representation of all teachers - primary, secondary and technical in both the government and the non-government sectors.[18] The VTF was taking advantage of a High Court decision in June, 1983, that 'service' organisations can be regarded as 'industrial'. By making an early application, the VTF pre-empted moves by the Australian Teachers' Federation (ATF) and the Independent Teachers' Federation of Australia (ITFA) to register as federal, i.e., national, unions. The latter bodies have stated that they will, if necessary, fight a long legal battle to oppose the TAA application. According to *The Teachers' Journal*, 'complex changes to the constitution of the ATF and its affiliates are necessary before it could seek federal recognition'.[19] The ATF is not a group of individuals who have come together, but an assembly of affiliates; this precludes them from seeking registration under the Conciliation and Arbitration Act. Application has been made under the name: 'The Australian Teachers' Union', with Van Davy as president.

For different reasons, and as the result of a recommendation of the NCEC, the Catholic education authorities in each State and Territory have lodged an objection to the registration of TAA. It is the intention of the CECV to object to any other such applications so that the employing authorities may participate in subsequent hearings and discussions. Relevant issues could be: first, TAA's intention to bring both government and non-government school teachers 'under one umbrella'; secondly, the existence of relevant statutory bodies and awards in a number of States; thirdly, the operation of both Federal and State jurisdictions, which will create confusion and uncertainty in the resolution of disputes; fourthly, the inclusion in membership of both principals and staff. [20] However, if school teachers are to be represented by a federally registered organisation, the key issue for the Catholic authorities might well be: 'Which union will best effect the common good of pupils, administration and teachers?' Only one union can be registered, and recognition of the VTF would stand in the way of the extension of ATF power through the government schools of Australia and of the Independent Teachers' Federation (ITF) in the non-government sector.

It is rather incongruous to find the secretary (Patrick Lee) of the ITF saying of the NCEC: 'We put it to them that if they don't like the scenario of employees of non-government schools ending up as the minority in a much larger organisation then they'd better cough up and get some barristers down there to oppose it.'[21] According to Lee, the NCEC would be opposing 'a mischievous attempt by a maverick union to interfere in the genuine, democratic representation of government and non-government teachers in the federal industrial sphere'.[22] The ITF decided on 5 November, 1983, to apply for federal registration as the representative of non-government school teachers. [23]

## ENROLMENTS AND THE PUBLIC IMAGE OF STATE SCHOOL UNIONS

In an address to the Queensland Teachers' Union, Senator Ryan stated: 'I am afraid that your job is not yet finished. Public education is under attack. Teachers and parents who are committed to public education need to reaffirm that commitment... I have set myself the task of restoring public confidence in government schools.' [24]

### Statistical data

During the 1960s, there was a drift from non-government to State schools, probably associated with the economic strain of fee-based schooling and a changing attitude of Catholics to their 'obligations'. It is currently difficult to define retention rates definitively because they do not consider movement to tertiary orientation studies, TAFE courses, etc. However, there has been a reversal of 'the drift' through the last half of the 1970s and early 1980s ('Australian School Statistics', January, 1984, Table 1.6). A declining birthrate has also contributed to a reduction in the total number of children in government primary schools. These trends have been associated with demographic movements in which there are 'decaying' and expanding residential suburbs, leading to loss of pupils and staffing entitlements or a requirement for new schools.

One interesting fact is the overall fall in the proportion of Catholic primary enrolments from 1965 in all States, despite recoveries from low figures in 1975-80; one exception is the ACT where the 1975 figure of 20.8% had risen to 26.2% by 1982. Corresponding figures for 'other' non-government schools show increases from, admittedly, low levels; however, the proportion in the Northern Territory fell from 14.3% in 1965 to 2.1% in 1982, probably as a result of transfer of schooling from non-Catholic missions to the Government.

A set of 'Planning Reports' (1983) by the Department of Education, Victoria, is of interest.[25] Important data were the proportions of pupils in government schools in 1982: 74.2% (Primary) and 68.7% (Secondary). Despite increasing enrolments in Catholic schools (149,273 in 1972, 166,731 in 1982), they have declined (as a percentage of all in non-government schools) from 79.9% (1965) to 73.4% (1982). Most of the increase in the 'non-Catholic' sector has been among non-denominational schools (Pentecostal / parent controlled / no church affiliation), 23 with 5,119 students in 1972, 61 with 11,511 students in 1982. In the same period the number of Church of England schools decreased from 32 to 27, but the number of students increased from 17,717 to 22,973. In 1981, the average number in a Church of England school was 753, comparing with 118 in a Lutheran school.

The Victorian reports trace pupil movement (1982-83) between schools, which is most marked at Year 6 / Year 7, the interface between primary and secondary schooling.

| Year 6 (Primary) / | Origin of pupil, per cent | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Year 7 (Secondary) | Govt P | Catholic P | Ind P | Other |
| Govt high school | 91.1 | 5.3 | 0.5 | 2.8 |
| Govt technical school | 89.7 | 7.9 | 0.6 | 1.6 |
| Catholic secondary school | 78.8 | 19.3 | 0.5 | 1.2 |
| 'Independent' school | 48.2 | 2.4 | 46.9 | 2.4 |

Another Victorian 'Planning Report': *Parental Choice of School* (1983) suggested that, for primary children, distance from home, 'school climate', and family reasons (attendance of relatives and siblings; the success and safety of the child) were important. 'Costs' weighed heavily with government school parents; 'religion' with non-government school parents. At the post primary level, 'climate' and 'type' were ranked highly, with non-government school parents attaching the same - and government school parents an increased - importance to 'religion'.

### Causes of movement

It is difficult to assess the causes of the non-government school recovery. First, increased Government funding has enabled fees to be held and has provided an incentive.[26] Secondly, John Dawkins, when spokesman for Labor in 1982, claimed that 'expansionist policies which have been adopted by especially the low-fee Catholic school systems in capital cities' was an important element.[27] This was, also, the view of McKinnon in 1984: 'Catholic bishops apparently have a canonical responsibility to extend Catholic schooling to adherents without schools. The provision of capital and recurrent funds to establish new schools was a goal more important (to the Catholic bishops) even than overcoming the gap in existing schools.'[28]

This judgment was qualified by Marginson of the ATF. Writing in 1982, he stated: 'It is generally assumed that Catholic authorities have tended to put their increasing Government subsidies into system expansion rather than improvements to resources in existing schools. This appears to be largely incorrect.' He quoted figures, comparing the number of Catholic schools in 1975 (1711) with 1981 (1697); average school sizes had risen from 290 to 315. In the same period, the number of 'other' (excluding Anglican) schools increased from 317 to 467.[29] The Catholic figures point, of course, to an enrolment increase which has certainly been associated with rationalisation, including the formation of co-educational schools, the building of new systemic schools, and the updating of non-systemic schools. Chapter 9 of *Report for the Triennium 1982-84* cites improvements in recurrent resources (student / teacher ratios) during 1975 to 1979.[30]

Thirdly, there may be more basic factors than quality of schooling and discipline, which vary from school to school, irrespective of sector. Margaret Willshire, past president Of VICSSO, can speak authoritatively. She stated that 'representatives of Catholic and private schools have told me on many occasions that it is the unsettled industrial climate of government schools which is the greatest thing going for their rising enrolments.'[31] Many parents in the Protestant community are concerned at the encouragement given by teacher unions to homosexual and lesbian teachers to present their 'alternative life style'.[32] Neil Dewan, assistant editor of the journal of the Australian Council for Educational Standards, maintained that 'the "real asset" of the non-government system, as it presently stands, is the combination of stability, purpose and direction of curriculum planning and general organisation.[33] Spaull has pointed to 'significant improvements in the professional characteristics of teachers over the past decade'.[34] However, this is only one factor that determines the quality of a school.

The 'Anderson Committee' provided thirty pages giving Dr G. Caldwell's summary of parent response in the ACT. To summarise (his) 'strengths and weaknesses' of ACT State schools would lead to the danger of incorrect emphasis. However, I was struck by two statements: 'The major advantage of the State school system is its inexpensiveness... For most of the parents at this meeting, the cost of sending children to Radford College is seen as being a substantial call on their income.'[35]

D.K. Moore reported 'an extraordinary development': in the ACT, between 1976 and 1982, other-than-Catholic enrolment figures in Catholic primary and secondary schools increased by a factor of four. In 1983, some 340 students had to be refused Year 7 places; 140 were non-

Catholic.[36] Senator Baume has noted: 'I have yet to go to a Catholic systemic school that is not bursting at the seams because of the number of children. Parents in many areas feel cheated because they cannot find places in the parochial schools.'[37]

## THE ATF AND THE ACTU

In 1979, the ATF decided to join the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU). The ATF is now the largest member of the 'ACSPA' ('white collar') 'industry' group of unions, which merged with the ACTU in that year; as such, the ATF has been the group representative on the ACTU executive since then. It is probable that, at the 1985 biennial ACTU Congress, other ACSPA unions - banks, insurance, municipal officers, etc., who 'are missing out' under the current system - will seek a second representative.

At present, the ATF has three members on the ACTU's education committee and its president, Van Davy, has been chairman from May, 1984. Following the national conference of the ATF in Adelaide, January, 1984, *The Canberra Times* reported Marginson as stating that the Federation would pursue a long term policy to obtain 'community support for a shift in the Government's position'. It would work initially through the ACTU's committee; according to Marginson, the Federation was 'seeking to show that the need-based system leads to the undermining of public education'.[38]

According to Jennie George, now ACSPA representative on the ACTU executive and well known in the NSW Teachers' Federation,

> The ACTU will determine the nature and size of the tax cuts in the next budget as the basis for negotiation with Government... the ATF does not have a policy on taxation reform... The ATF also takes the view that we should not be arguing just tax cuts, but tax reform. It is not in the interests of the public sector - or the education industry - to see tax cuts if it means there will be less money available for improvements in education... There are still many unions to be convinced of our anti-state aid policy, particularly as the ACTU's agreement with the ALP recognises the principle of needs based funding. But we can gain wider union support for our demands on a whole range of issues. The ACTU is currently assisting the ATF in making representations to the Government about funding for government schools... We must seek out those issues which are capable of widespread support, while at the same time pursuing our principal stands of opposition to state aid.[39]

## THE POLITICAL ACTIVITY OF STATE SCHOOL UNIONS

Professor H. Gelber has claimed that Australians have a predilection for collectivist approaches to social and economic problems. However, they are also individualists and 'a great majority of voters now believes that governmental decision making has largely slipped out of the hands of politicians and into those of impersonal bureaucracies inadequately accountable to the public.' According to Gelber, those 'shielded from the consequences of their own actions' include 'members of the New Class such as teachers'.[40]

The Victorian unions (excluding the Victorian Teachers' Federation) gave strong support to the Labor Party's campaign of 1982 and, in 1983, the Australian Teachers' Federation mounted a series of expensive advertising slots. This money was raised by tax deductible levies (!) on members; direct contributions to political parties are not tax deductible. Reports that the major Victorian teacher unions were planning to affiliate with the ALP - to balance any admission of right-wing unions - were claimed as uncertain in mid-March, 1984.[41]

In comparing the use of public funds in the government and non-government sectors, teacher unions have concentrated on imbalances in Commonwealth grants (20 per cent of the total) in their 'share of the cake' commercials, while completely neglecting imbalances in State budgets (80 per cent of the total). 'The Teachers' Federation advertising campaign distorts the facts,' said the Catholic Education Office, Sydney, protesting to the Director of the Federation of Commercial Television Stations.[42] The ATF has not ignored the facts in its official journal, but provided its own interpretation to questions such as the following: 'But State Governments spend most of their money on government schools? Shouldn't the Commonwealth Government favour private schools to compensate? The official ATF response was: 'There is no existing agreement between the Commonwealth and State Governments on responsibilities for school funding. All Governments are free to pursue their own schools' funding priorities and should be judged by these priorities - not those of another tier of government.'[43] However, there has been a *de facto* relationship from 1976 to 1983; the Australian Education Council, in association with the Commonwealth Schools Commission, should make an effort to obtain an equitable solution *de jure*.

Phil Carswell, the editor of *The Victorian Teacher*, described delegates to the 1984 conference of the ATF as 'amongst the most experienced, influential and agile unionists in the country'. He predicted that 1984 would see 'more sophisticated approaches' in 'a strategy that leads to the permanent elimination of State Aid'.[44] The short-term strategy was centred on freezing grants to independent schools at current levels for the next four years; the long-term strategy aims at ending all funding.

On 7 June, 1984, the ATF initiated an intense $200,000 campaign with an introductory television and radio advertisement claiming that 'money is being siphoned off, damaging public schools. Put bluntly it is a rort...a rip-off of taxpayers' money'.[45] The ATF did the masterminding, and ACSSO provided the channel of communication to parents. Their main fear was that equitable Government funding on a school or, as I prefer, of families would give a degree of choice to parents that would affect government school enrolments. Catholic authorities reacted to the new campaign. Fr Williams, chairman of the NCEC, said: 'It is very likely to influence governments rather than the public. I find it offensive that people are not told the truth.'[46]

There is ample evidence of the power that teacher federations wield in ALP branches, during pre-election campaigns and in the aftermath of recent victories, at the time of education budgets, in lobbying at ALP conferences, and in determining - through UNESCO and OECD - the character education assumes. Executives migrate into bureaucracies as commissioners, members of boards, consultants, and private secretaries, e.g., Gerry Tickell of the TTUV and the ATF; Lester Rootsey and Barry Rimmer of the VTU, and Brian Conway of the VSTA. Union members join ALP branches where they played prominent roles in the Victorian 1982 election campaign. For those who reach the top, there is the plum of pre-selection and election to parliament; in 1982, 12 of the 26 successful new parliamentarians (17 MLAs, nine MLCs), were teachers.[47] All these positions demand hard work on behalf of 'the community', but also provide financial reward; according to David Combe there is a view in the Labor Party that there is only one proper way to get rich - through the largesse and perks of political office.[48] In addition, there is status, satisfaction for ambition, and the power to attempt creation of a new world, which may or may not be built on principles acceptable to parents. Susan Ryan admits that, although exhausted by the demands of office, she is still struck by its magic; 'we'll be in Parliament when the new House opens, and you have moments when you think this is fantastic'.[49]

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3. Victorian Association of Teachers (VAT). 'Lessons from lost causes', February, 1982.

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6. Fih, Barbara. 'Teachers to think again on ALP vote', The Age, 3 February, 1984: 'The new "Teachers' Federation of Victoria" hopes, said J. Young of the VTU, that "splinter groups" like the VTF and Principals' Association will not be recognised.' See, also, G. Reilly, 'Three big teacher unions combine', The Age , 9 July, 1984 and A. Spaull, 'Unions: new marker on road to unity', The Age, 24 July, 1984. The Education Department's case that there should be only one recognised unit through which teachers make submissions to

VTSCAC (Victorian Teaching Service Conciliation and Arbitration Commission) has been challenged in the Supreme Court by both the VTF and the Federation of Victorian School Administators; see VTF-Chat, October, 1984.

7. Journal of the Victorian Teachers' Federation. 'VTF members urged to use their heads in the State Aid crisis', December, 1983, pp. 30-31, 12; '3-union campaign against private school funding', August, 1984, pp. 20-21.

8. The Teachers' Journal. 'The three unions position on State Aid', 9, no. 9, August, 1983.

9. The Three Unions Budget submission to the Victorian Government. See, also, G. Reilly. 'Cut finance to private schools say unions', The Age, 29 May, 1984. See News Weekly, 'Teachers reject anti-State Aid policy', 12 September, 1984, where the presidents of three VTU branches are reported as objecting to new VTU hardline policies.

10. Sydney Sun. Editorial. 'Scrapping in school', 18 October, 1983.

11. The Australian. Editorial. 'At last - top marks for the teachers', 29 November, 1983. However, there has been no greater stability. Mr R. Cavalier succeeded Mr Mulock as NSW Minister of Education in early 1984. He is identified with Labor's Left, but told the NSWTF to 'start behaving like a real union' and to forget the privileged position it has had with the Government, even though this involves 'a large dose of culture shock'; see D. Shanahan, 'Party's over says the new minister', The Sydney Morning Herald, 3 July, 1984. When the 'Guidelines 1985-88' were released, Ivan Pagett reacted with the comment that Mr Hawke and his Government were 'closet Tories' and that the Guidelines were 'a sellout' and 'a repudiation of policy'; see The Australian, 'Teachers attack Govt for education "accord breach" ', 20 August, 1984..

12. Scarrabelotti, G. 'New leadership for Teachers' Federation in new year', The Catholic Weekly., 28 December, 1983; News Weekly, 'Will Wran tackle anti-democratic rules of NSW Teachers' Federation', 18 January, 1984.

13. Owen, R. 'NCC role against teachers' left "no secret", Santamaria', The Catholic Leader, 11 December, 1983. No person, reporting publicly, has a better knowledge of Communist or Left-Wing operation than B.A. Santamaria. In News Weekly, 'Point of View: The attack on education', 23 June, 1971, he reported a supposedly secret Communist Party meeting, attended by NSWTF and TTAV (now TTUV) officials. He alleged a 'strategy of using the slogans of educational reform to make more and more demands than the system could stand... The attack on the structure of government schools was to be supplemented by an equal attack on independent schools, particularly the Catholic parish schools. The best way, it was said, was to limit State Aid to its present levels. While this wouldn't force the closure of wealthier independent schools, it

would, in fact, ultimately destroy the poorer parish schools.'

14. Address by Senator Ryan to the Disadvantaged Schools Program Review conference, Sydney, 2 June, 1984.

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16. News Weekly, 'ATF's double standard on State Aid', 18 January, 1984.

17. Commonwealth Schools Commission. 1984. Funding Policies for Australian Schools, 'Minority Report' by Van Davy, Attachment A, pp. 138-141.

18. The Teachers' Association of Australia (brochure). See, also, 'Teachers to form federal union? Historic High Court decision', ITA-ITFA Newsmonth, 3, no. 7, August, 1983.

19. The Teachers' Journal, 10, no. 1, February, 1984: cf. News Weekly, 'Australian Teachers' Union: legal action to thwart moderates?', 8 February, 1984. For a general discussion of the legal position, see V. Gleeson, 'The teachers' industrial revolution', Education News, 18, no. 9, April, 1984, pp. 24-27.

20. Cf. Catholic Education Office of Victoria. 'Industrial relations and Catholic schools in Victoria: developments in 1983', February, 1984. See, also, The Catholic Leader, 5 February, 1984, 'Catholic schools object to new teachers' union', and the response of Lucy Meo and Andrew Brideson, 20 May, 1984, which clarified 'incorrect statements' and pointed to a probable alternative: association of the ITF with the ATF. 'The ATF should give far greater cause for alarm to Catholic and other non-State educators and teachers than the TAA...' Patrick Lee of the ITF stated in the issue of 17 June that the ITF 'sought a membership of non-government school teachers only. Unlike the TAA, it had the official support of the associations of independent school teachers in every State'.

21. Brass, K. 'Drawing the battlelines in a classroom campaign', The Australian, 3-4 December, 1983.

22. The Canberra Times. 'Teachers unite to oppose Victorian group's application', 14 November, 1983.

23. TACS, Newsletter, December, 1983.

24. Address by Senator Ryan to the annual conference of the Queensland Teachers' Union, 26 June, 1983. Cf. her 1984 Guidelines, s. 5, and article: 'Policy: a counter-attack for public education', Education News, 18, no.6, September, 1983, pp.44-45.

25. Victoria: Department of Education. Six Planning Reports from the Statistical Information and Research Section, 1983; ABS no. 4216.0 (11 April, 1984), 'Non-government schools, Australia, 1983', Table 1. CEOV Statistical Bulletin, 4, no. 1, July, 1984, gives enrolments (1983) in Victorian Catholic schools as 170,045,

which includes 200 in Special Schools.

See, also, 'Enrolments in Australian Schools'. 1982. Report to the Australian Education Council, AGPS. This document supplies some interesting facts, e.g., fluctuations in the proportions of pupils in the government / non-government sectors hide the fact that total enrolments in non-government schools have increased each year from 1963 to 1981, rates of growth being 2.8% (1964), 0.2% (1972), 3.3% (1981). Government school enrolments increased from 1963 to 1978, and then declined from 1979 to 1981. In these last three years, the expansion in the non-government sector has been associated with increases in numbers 'in Roman Catholic and "other" largely new style schools'. Another relevant report 981) to the AEC, prepared by the Centre of Policy Studies, Monash University is 'The changing patterns of School Enrolment and their implications for educational policy and management'. It considers Government policies ('facilities, closure and costs') in a situation where demographic patterns and enrolments are fluctuating.

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28.Garcia, L. 'Misuse of school funds denied', The Sydney Morning Herald, 21 February, 1984; McKinnon, K. R., 'Meeting needs: seven years' hard labour', in Palmer (ed), p. 111.

29. Marginson, S. 'The privatisation of Australian schools', The Australian Teacher, September, 1982. The thesis contradicts the well-publicised views of his president, Davy. See The Teachers' Journal, 'The National Page: stop the rorts!', July, 1984, and Davy's statement in a paper to the June, 1984, NCIS conference: 'A good deal of the available funds in these schools is being used for the expansionary purpose, rather than to increase the resource provision in so-called poor schools.'

30. There is no substance for the statement (CPD, 30 May, 1984, p. 2530) of Mrs Elaine Darling : 'What actually happened under the Fraser Government was that class sizes burgeoned. The Catholic schools, the non-government schools to which the Opposition pays lip service, were allowed to become so large in terms of class sizes because of funding which was not based on needs. The result was a final drop out of kids at high school age.'

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# 8 *Independent School Teacher Organisations*

## NON-GOVERNMENT SCHOOL TEACHER ORGANISATIONS

Various associations represent teachers in non-government secondary and primary schools.

### CATHOLIC

Before considering the current position in Catholic circles, it is relevant to recall the situation in the 1960s. In 1963 the Catholic Institute of Teachers had been formed in Sydney, with 200 attending its first meeting. In the following year, Graeme Chaplin formed the Catholic Male Lay Teachers Guild of Victoria; the Guild had no contacts with the Sydney Institute. Many, but not all, of those concerned with the Guild were employed in Christian Brothers' schools. The executive of this Congregation had taken the initiative in establishing just salary scales; teachers in their schools were consulted, but not the Guild as such. The Guild was critical of a 'Code of Ethics', formulated by the Christian Brothers, which discouraged supplementary outside employment, i.e., 'moonlighting'. *

After Chaplin left the teaching profession in 1968, the Guild ceased to operate as a viable body and its place was subsequently taken by the Association of Teachers in Victorian Catholic Secondary Schools (ATVCSS), founded in 1974. During the interim period, teachers had been well represented on committees of the expanding Catholic Education Office, and this practice has continued.

At first, ATVCSS had a large number of religious as its membership and on its executive. The aims were directed to professional rather than union affairs. Bernard Brosnan, President in 1983, has stated that 'the Association is primarily a professional body, but with a significant and permanent industrial relations aspect'.[1] The latter emphasis has certainly increased with the passage of time. Special attention has been given to procedures in termination of employment and to the rights of teachers in individual cases.

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I was familiar with most details of the Guild's foundation and operation, as Chaplin taught in the same school - C.B.C. St Kilda. I published articles in the Guild's News Letter ('Workers in the Vineyard': no. 9, April-May and no. 10, June,1966). In 1968, I was approached by the Guild who wished me to write an 'Appreciation' of Graeme Chaplin. This document is referred to in a Seminar paper, Australian History, Monash University, by J.F.Sheely. The final draft was regarded by the Guild Executive (17 September, 1968) as a 'fair and reasonable statement'; it was then 'anxious to publish the paper in an edition of the News Letter'. Approval for publication was given by the Christian Brothers. However, after time delays, I left the final decision to the discretion of the Guild's President, Mr J.N. Murphy, and he decided to place the 'Appreciation' on file - where it is still available.

The Victorian Catholic Primary Teachers' Association (VCPTA) represents primary school teachers in this sector and has, since September, 1983, joined with the Secondary School Association to bring out a single publication ('Teachers' Associations Catholic Schools', TACS) representing their views. In a previous ATVCSS Members' News Bulletin (no. 67), Brosnan presented policies that sought for Catholic secondary schools 'Commonwealth funding of the salaries of all staff, both teaching and ancillary, and the State funding of all other recurrent costs (excluding capital and interest payments), so that government funding of Catholic secondary schools will be commensurate on a per capita basis with expenditure on government schools'. One of my lay colleagues, who had been identified with Catholic teacher 'unionism' in both NSW and Victoria during the 1960s, said that he did not agree with this view: 'Without some measure of sacrifice - to attest our independence and give witness to our mission - we are open to integration.'

I question Brosnan's suggestion as to the balance between Commmonwealth and State contributions and, more importantly, the overall pattern of funding which seems to draw its inspiration from the New Zealand integration scheme. The approach threatens the autonomy of individual schools and systems. It obscures the fact that the obligation of governments is fundamentally to parents, not teachers. It would encourage the absorption of Catholic teacher associations into bigger State school unions with different philosophies and aims; admittedly, commentators are noting an increasing convergence of some the 'official' views of the executives of the organisations in the two sectors.

When the Cain Labor Government came into power in 1982, the Association sought, unsuccessfully, to obtain representation on the proposed State Board of Education. Letters (14 May and 10 September, 1982) to the Minister of Education, the Hon R. Fordham, eventually led to a reply (2 February, 1983) in which the Minister indicated that he believed that 'we have a good balance of experience and expertise in the present membership'.

In a subsequent letter to the Premier, Brosnan wrote: 'This Association respectfully suggests on behalf of the teachers in Catholic schools that the Report of the State Board be rejected... If some such action is not taken, this Association can only predict an alienation of teachers and those they influence from the policies of your Government.' The letter also claimed that 'a simple review of State teacher organisation literature evidences the fact that many of the Board members are merely delegates of those organisations who in fact have been required to consult their organisation on every substantial matter and vote according to the policy of their organisation'.[2]

The Associations subsequently had interviews with Mr Fordham and the Shadow Minister of Education, Mr Jona. Discussion with the latter hinged around funding issues and representation on bodies such as the State and Registration Boards. The delegation explained to Mr Jona that they had refused an offer to join the Liberal Party's advisory committee because, while the associations wished to make submissions to the committee, they 'did not want to appear to be too close to one party or the other'. [3]

The Catholic Primary and Secondary School Teacher Associations are represented on the newly-formed Teachers' (Catholic Schools) Conciliation and Arbitration Board. This Board is a statutory body and has powers under the Industrial Relations Act (1979) to set down conditions of employment for teachers (excluding principals) in Catholic schools. Employers are represented by The Victorian Catholic Schools' Association. An independent chairman is assigned to the Board by the Industrial Relations Commission of Victoria. The staff of Xavier College, Melbourne, indicated that they did not wish to participate. [4] The December, 1983 meeting of the CECV admitted the Xavier group of schools to the Long Service Leave scheme, thereby assisting portability in transfers. A Salaries and Conditions Board will cover principals and other employees in Catholic schools not already under existing awards.

In visits to schools under the aegis of the Board, the main questions occupying teacher representatives have been class sizes, teacher loads, 'release time', out-of-hours duties, and administrative patterns.[5] Although the members of the Board have not completed their negotiations regarding the first Award, there are several areas in which agreement has been reached. [6]

While fully supporting the concept of the Board, the CECV has been anxious to avoid legalism and centralised, bureaucratic structures which will infringe on the rights of headmasters and staff to negotiate what is in the best interests of the local school community - parents, pupils and teachers. For example, a CECV document (5 August, 1980) - *Physical Conditions for Service for Catholic Secondary Schools in Victoria* - stated: 'It has long been the practice in Catholic secondary schools to leave the development of policy in these matters to the local school authority. Local demands must be met sensitively and quickly.' (1.4) 'Policy' is, perhaps, an inappropriate word as, while the document avoids close detail and directives, it supplies clear guidelines. As Brian Crittenden has said: 'The trade-union approach...is completely at odds with the nature of the relationship between teacher and learner that is at the heart of the educational process.' [7]

## NON-CATHOLIC

The Victorian Association of Teachers in Independent Schools (VATIS) was formed through an amalgamation of the Assistant Mistresses Association and the equivâlent 'Masters' Association'. VATIS has delegates on the council of the Incorporated Association of Registered Teachers of Victoria (IARTV), a body which includes heads of schools and assistants.

VATIS is concerned, primarily, with teachers in non-Catholic schools. When Mr D. Forde, the president, spoke to parents on 12 July,1983, he referred to employer / employee relations as being 'based on trust and the honest exchange of ideas'. [8] However, he warned that the concept of trust could face challenges in the future. He was speaking in the context of the reduction in grants (Commonwealth and State), with its implications - increase in fees or reduction of services / staff.

The Catholic Associations have given attention to the common ground that exists with VATIS, like them an affiliate of the ITFA.

## THE AFFILIATED TEACHERS' UNION (VICTORIA)

The Affiliated Teachers' Union (ATU, not to be confused with the new Australian Teachers' Union) was established in 1923 under the name of the Labour Teachers' Union. It affiliated with the ALP, the Victorian Trades Hall Council (VTHC), and the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU). In the 1940s, as a result of the activity of the 'Industrial Groups', the ATU's 'Left Wing' executive was displaced by moderates.

The late 1950s and the early 1960s was the golden age of the ATU, when it had over 1000 members and was represented on the Teachers' Tribunal. Initially membership of the ATU had been solely from departmental teachers but, during this period, there was an influx of membership from non-government schools and coaching colleges.

A decline in membership of the ATU (it is still entitled to three THC delegates) can be associated with hostility to the influence of 'Right Wing' elements not directly involved in Education, an image of connection with the DLP, and the rise, in the government sector, of other more militant teacher organisations. Most of the present members of the ATU are teachers in Catholic schools. ATVCSS and VCPTA consider that they represent their interests and they are, therefore, opposed to the ATU.

In the 1960s the ATU advocated 'an education voucher for the basic amount...available to the parent of every child at every school', which it linked with the professional status of teachers and the aim of winning freedom from bureaucracies. The flavour of ATU thinking is to be seen in a submission to the Board of Inquiry into the Teaching Service (8 June,1971): 'The payment of a fee brings the right of a free choice to select the type of professional service given and the actual practitioner who gives the service... How can a fee basis for the teaching profession arise again? It can be done if the federal government forced that master of camouflage "Consolidated Revenue" to disgorge a publicly known portion for education, raised if necessary by a separate tax. Then have this portion justly distributed to every child.' In addition, the ATU had an enlightened parent-based 'needs' policy.

## THE INDEPENDENT TEACHERS' FEDERATION

The Independent Teachers' Federation (ITF), formerly of Australia (ITFA), is a national body with affiliates, including the Victorian Catholic associations, in all States and the ACT.

The formation of the ITF has been associated with increasing activity of its affiliates in Queensland, NSW, the ACT, and Victoria. Issues have been varied: a submission in Queensland that registration and willingness are sufficient evidence of competence to teach Religious Education in Catholic schools; in the ACT, a demand for acceptance of the Commonwealth Teaching Service structure, so as to generate promotional positions; and, in Victoria, presentation of a 'log of claims' applicable in Catholic schools.[9] The ITF has made strong claims to the Commonwealth Minister, Senator Ryan, for a place on the Schools Commission on the ground that the two members for the non-government sector are 'employer' representatives.[10]

The Federation's funding policies appear to be fully consistent with the Guidelines of Senator Ryan. Michael Raper, elected as national president in December, 1983, said that the executive 'supported the broad thrust of the Federal Government's funding policy'.[11] Mr Dawkins, speaking in the House of Representatives, described 'the intervention of this organisation in this totally responsible, totally non-hysterical way' as 'an important contribution to the debate'.[12] Raper would 'like to see the private commitment of funds set by contract and the public funding given on that basis'.[13] The national secretary, Patrick Lee spoke in the same terms as his president; he also said that the ITF would oppose any granting of exemptions from Labor's Sex Discrimination Bill to independent schools.[14] Lee accused the NCEC of 'deliberately covering up the many divisions within the Australian education community caused by recent government [meaning Coalition] policy'.[15] Allegations that the ITF has favoured integration of all schools into one comprehensive system have been denied.[16]

While Peter O'Brien, the general secretary of QATIS, stated that 'allocation of funds should be done on the basis of a fair index of need', he added: 'We are concerned, however, that there be no diminution in the working conditions or real educational standards in any of our schools, and if some schools are effected by the new measures we would expect the school administrations to safeguard the position of our teachers'.[17] When stated without qualification, this is a narrow view which places the legitimate interests of teachers above the task, the students, and the capacity of 'parents to pay'.

When O'Brien commented on the views of Vince O'Rourke, Director of the Catholic Education Office in Brisbane, as 'strange', T. Oberg pointed out that O'Rourke had said nothing new and that 'it is not a comforting thought that teachers in Catholic schools form the bulk of a union whose main public spokesman does not seem to understand and/or agree with the basic philosophy of those schools'.[18] Raper, Lee, O'Brien, and Shearman, an organiser and former president of QATIS, all taught in Catholic schools during the 1970s. The last two named have been identified with Marxist-Leninist thought and posts in Socialist Left organisations.[19] The (Communist) Tribune speaks of 'the present leftwing-led IFTA'.[20]

O'Brien has been reported as saying, in his response to the Schools Commission's *Funding Policies for Australian Schools* (1984), 'While many private school teachers sympathise with the plight of under-resourced State schools, the solution is not to take away money from private schools in order to build up State education. An increasing number of parents are choosing to send their children to private schools, and the Government has a real and important responsibility to ensure that conditions in private schools are such as to provide an adequate education for students attending them.' [21]

A feature of ITF policy has been 'concern that Government funds are supporting schools which do not comply with the industrial law of the State and which follow curricula such as the ACE (Accelerated Christian Education) curriculum, which do not provide an acceptable education'. While law protecting teachers' interests must be observed, laws should not restrict voluntary efforts. A teacher's role demands dedication and a measure of unselfishness, which are not always consistent with industrial awards which demand a financial settlement for every 'extra'.

Terry Monagle, the secretary of the affiliated Victorian Catholic teacher associations, is the Junior Vice-President of the ITF. Identification with ITF decisions and policies raises questions on 'Catholic' expectations of teachers who formerly carry on the tradition of 'contributing' services to reduce parent fees. Also, what is the meaning of the phrase 'acceptable education'? The DOGS have always sought the closure of Catholic schools on the score of 'low standards', where they equated resources and the quality of education. It may be noted that ATVCSS seeks full parity with State school teachers on salaries and conditions. This is a legitimate claim but, unless it is met by the State through adequate per pupil grants, it is insufficient ground for placing further burdens on Catholic parents - when the present financial returns to teachers are not unattractive. Much has been said about conditions of work in Catholic schools, but there are advantages compensating for disadvantages.

The ITF has lodged an application for registration with the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Commission; it expresses its opposition to the 'maverick clique from Victoria, which has called itself the Teachers Assocation of Australia'.

The executives of the ITF and the ATF have met together and have continuing points of contact. However, as Raper stated in June, 1984, it is 'inevitable that ITFA would dissent from the extreme position adopted by the ATF and the anti-state-aid lobby... The inconsistent proposed freeze...is totally uncceptable'. He sought a solution by expanding support for both sectors because of 'the totally inadequate level of education funding in Australia'. He opposed determination of grants by a nexus with State school costs on very dubious grounds, viz., its 'unfortunate consequences - increasing the gap between government and non-government school resource levels; the continued experience of large class sizes in many non-government schools; and a failure to require government or private source money to be directed to the precise elements of resource deficiency in particular schools'. He seems to think that these real or alleged deficencies will be removed by funding under the guidance of the 'community standards model'. [22]

The NSW Independent Teachers' Association (ITA) and the NSW Teachers' Federation have a working relationship; both these bodies are affiliates of the NSW Labor Council. The membership of the ITA increased considerably after it achieved an award in 1970; further increases came after 1978 when the NSW Industrial Commission decided that members of the ITA were to be given preference in employment. The Tasmanian Teachers' Federation (government) has also made moves towards the Tasmanian Registered Teachers' Association (non-government). In South Australia, the Association of Teachers in Independent Schools (ATIS) has, until recently, been affiliated with the Institute of Teachers (SAIT), which supported State aid to non-government schools on a needs basis. However, the relationship between SAIT and the ATF, and current ATF policies, have now prompted ATIS to sever the connection with SAIT.

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4. Batties, Rebecca. The Age, 'State Catholic teachers get wages board' (8 April); 'Xavier shuns schools board' (30 May); and the letter of response (2 June, 1983) from A. J. Macken giving Xavier College's reasons for preferring exemptions from awards. The Batties article of 30 May records the protest of the Catholic Teacher Associations at Xavier's failure to participate; see, also, ATVCSS Bulletin, no. 68.

5. TACS, December, 1983. The July/August, 1984, issue carries an article,'Private lifestyle in Catholic schools', which raises the question of the 'right' of teachers to 'privacy of conscience and lifestyle'. For critiques, see letters to the Advocate, 8 November, 1984, from G. Gaskin/Elizabeth Mendes and Mrs P. Green.

6. See Catholic Education Office of Victoria, 'Industrial relations and Catholic schools in Victoria: developments in 1983', February, 1984, for an authoritative statement; also, CEOV circulars, 17 September, 1984: 'The Award for teachers', 'Settlement of disputes in Catholic schools', 'CECV interim procedures for dealing with matters of redundancy in Catholic schools', and Newsletter no. 1, October, 1984, from the CECV Industrial Relations Committee.

7. Quoted by C. Goodwin in a letter to The Age, 31 May, 1983. A statement, 'The Award Policy of the Association', tabled at a meeting of ATVCSS/VCPTA on 6 July, 1984, accepts many, if not all, the principles cited in the CECV document.

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### THE NON-CATHOLIC RESPONSE

The former Catholic Bishop of Sandhurst, Victoria (B. Stewart) had stressed that the the Government decisions on the 'Karmel' Report were divisive within the non-government school community.[1] Non-Catholic authorities - individual headmasters, Alan McI. Scott, Executive Officer of NCIS, and A.R.C. Hewison, secretary, the Association of Teachers in Independent Schools - commented with restraint and dignity. The latter pointed out the disadvantage suffered by individual parents in large category A schools and the acute problems faced by small schools in Victoria, such as Hamilton College, St Anne's and Gippsland Grammar School, All Saints College, Bathurst, and Scotch College, Launceston. In addition, Hewison noted: 'It may cause a revival of sectarian feeling in the community at a time when such divisive feeling is at an all time low.'[2] P. Symons instanced the position of the Jewish school, Mount Scopus, with 532 pupils, a quarter paying no fees, others paying in part only, and an overdraft of $800,000.[3]

There were not only divisions between non-Catholic and Catholic in 1973, very evident in such suburbs as Essendon (Melbourne), where families lived together in the same street with children attending Penleigh & Essendon Grammar, Lowther Hall, and the Catholic colleges: St Bernard's, St Columba's, and Ave Maria. There were also divisions in the Catholic community. According to an editorial in *The Catholic Worker*, September, 1973, fellow Catholics could be described in these terms: 'The Catholic powers-that-be and the Parents and Friends have shown little awareness of these conditions (in working-class districts) or concern for them. The Parents and Friends are middle-class Catholics with very little idea of what schools are like on the other side of the tracks.' The accuracy of the comment was suspect, and the hostility of the tone was obvious.

### T.A. O'DONNELL

When, in 1978, Paul Kelly referred to divisions within the Catholic community, and to crisis, Dr T.A. O'Donnell, the chairman of CECV, accepted the account as a 'generally authoritative view', but he rejected the allegation of 'division'.[4] However, I consider that Kelly was right ; the seeds can be traced back a decade beyond 1978.

Dr O'Donnell has had a distinguished career as an inorganic chemist at Melbourne University, as chairman of the Academic Committee set up by Archbishop Simonds in May, 1964, and of the CECV from 1973 to 1981. He has expressed his views publicly on a number of occasions, and they have produced a response in the Catholic community.

In 1969, a letter from O'Donnell to *The Tribune* reminded Brothers and Nuns that they were not made educational experts by religious profession and warned against appointing 'day-to-day practitioners, either teachers or managers' to serve on advisory committees. I responded, describing myself as a practitioner, but regretting that the Academic Committee, then defunct, had never had a representative of teaching Brothers or Sisters. [5]

In 1971, the Catholic Education Office released a report to the Melbourne Catholic Education Board. Fr Martin summarised its thrust: 'You will notice that the CEO has recommended that the total cover should include at least the full primary school.' While the CEO saw the need for secondary schools, it considered that the priority should be given to primary schooling.[6] When B.A. Santamaria stressed the absolute necessity for maintaining and developing secondary schools, O'Donnell attacked his thesis, claiming that 'publicly, Mr Santamaria has demonstrated no particular expertise as an educationalist, sociologist or statistician'. [7]

A difference of viewpoint was, also, apparent after the Federal Budget (1974) reduced the concessional taxation deduction. Ronald Conway claimed that 'the Budget has given with one hand and taken away with the other'.[8] Archbishop T.F. Little of Melbourne described the change as 'devastating', and Bishop A.F. Fox of Sale analysed the impact of the deduction on the low-income earner with children at a non-government school.[9] K. Gould offered a professional analysis from a school perspective. [10]

Dr O'Donnell, as chairman of the CECV, raised the matter with the P.M., Mr Whitlam, in October, 1974. The latter's private secretary, Michael Delaney, noted O'Donnell's 'particular concern'. In explaining why the Government had not altered its decision, Delaney made a significant comment: 'This was done in the belief that money is best spent in the education field in directly improving facilities rather than by granting concessional allowances.' [11] When one makes out a balance sheet: gain in grants to low resource schools/loss in taxation concessions to parents, one realises that the Government's extra expenditure on recurrent funding was compensated by the increase in taxation revenues.[12] However, O'Donnell seemed to agree with Delaney, for he had earlier stated that he felt that emphasis on the taxation issue detracted from the positive achievements of the Karmel Report. [13]

In his 1978 article, Kelly referred to papers published by G.E.F. Hughes in *Quadrant* (March: 'What price freedom?'; May: 'Dunne blows the whistle'; July: 'Letters'). While Hughes did not violate historical or economic facts, his breezy and comic treatment had the capacity to wound. Dr O'Donnell bitterly attacked Hughes' 'intemperate, personal attacks on Father Martin'. Hughes, in his July letter, admitted that the latter had been placed in 'an exposed and difficult situation'. [14]

A major feature of O'Donnell's letter was an attack on 'other bodies which purport to project widely-held and authentic opinions on behalf of the Australian Catholic community but which lack both the endorsement of the bishops and the necessary professional support in statistical, financial and related matters'. The context of the letter made it clear that the Australian Parents' Council, and its affiliates, were the main 'other bodies'. The Council has fought for distributive justice for all families and, as is shown in Chapter 6, there is no evidence that it has deviated from general principles established in Episcopal statements. Secondly, one should judge work by its quality rather than by the degree of 'support', which denotes nothing more than the availability of money and resources. Since when have these been guarantees of excellence?

There would, probably, have been no problem, no division within the non-government school community, no division within the Catholic community - whether given responsibility by the Bishops or just concerned with justice as every Catholic must be - if the Interim Committee had remained true to its own principle: '...every member of the society has an entitlement to a period of education at public expense' (2.23). In practice, it decided to phase out some schools (students, parents). Led by Senator Murphy, Cabinet voted to eliminate grants for high resource schools from the beginning of calendar year 1974. The Labor Government did not follow Article 26 of the U.N. *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*: 'Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages', but opted for making tertiary education completely free. In spite of some 'positive discrimination' in enrolment of 'disadvantaged' students, the children of well-to-do parents have continued to have a bonanza ever since.

In a perceptive article (1973), Alan Trengove quoted J. Wilson-Hogg, headmaster of Trinity Grammar School, Sydney: 'To preserve their independence, the schools would need to strengthen their interdependence for there were powerfully inimical forces working against them. The most ancient principle of assault had already been invoked: divide and destroy.' Trengove noted: 'There are dark hints that the Government could follow up its cut in aid by removing or limiting tax deductions for education next year. Thousand of parents will then have no choice. They will have to send their children to State schools...'[15] So, it turned out. It has never been recognised sufficiently that, on many issues, Whitlam and Beazley had no power to counter the Left, in this issue led by J.F. Cairns.[16] Secondly, those who talk glibly of 'maintenance of (private) effort' have never made any attempt to allow for the effect of the 1974 tax deduction alteration on net costs to parents with children at non-government schools.

## POST-1973

Following their treatment in 1973, non-Catholic school authorities and parents have not been satisfied with funding procedures. While NCIS accepted increased funding on the basis of need, and while courtesy and good sense dictated a low-key approach, non-Catholics could not see why similarly placed Catholic parents should be rewarded (by higher grants) for their unwillingness to make the same sacrifices. One must recognise that low resource schools generally cater for low income groups, but this is not true universally. In addition, no school population is economically homogeneous, and recurrent resources, measured by SRRI, are no sure guide to quality of education.

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15. Trengove, A. 'A lesson in politics', The Sun, 1 September, 1973, quoting from a paper of J. Wilson-Hogg: 'Our fragile independence'.

16. Cf. Whitlam's letter to The Age, 12 June, 1969, in response to an Age editorial. See, also, The Sun, 'Pledge on colleges. More cash - P.M.', 27 April, 1974. Beazley in his address to the Federal Labor Conference in 1973 claimed: 'The Report clears away prejudices which have plagued the nation'.

## INTRODUCTION

The Whitlam Government placed the work of the Karmel Committee on a permanent basis by the Schools Commission Act 1973, which led to the establishment of the Australian Schools Commission.

The Labor Government (1973-75) produced the first Guidelines as part of a policy of constraint on expenditure in the 1975-76 Budget. After electoral victory in December, 1975, the Liberal / National Party Coalition annually issued Guidelines in greater detail. Senator Susan Ryan, the present Minister for Education and Youth Affairs, followed this practice soon after taking office in 1983. The Commission initially saw its role as the adviser, even arbiter, for Governments on educational 'needs'. Government Guidelines stating policies, and the harsh realities of budgetary priorities and overall deficits, have been bitter pills for some commissioners to swallow.

## THE COMMONWEALTH DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

The Commonwealth Department for Education maintains a low profile compared with the Schools Commission, which receives publicity - at times, even sought by some members. However, the secretary of the Department is the official adviser to the Minister and, in 1972, K.N. Jones, secretary in the Whitlam and Fraser eras, played an important role in drafting the terms of reference for the Karmel Committee. Departmental staff are recruited from the public service and, generally, have had a different background to Schools Commission staff and commissioners.

Jones was succeeded in 1983 by Dr Peter Wilenski, now chairman of the Public Service Board. Ms Helen Williams was acting secretary of the Department for Education after Wilenski's departure in late 1983 and is now deputy secretary. Professor Richard Johnson, formerly professor of classics and pro-vice-chancellor in the Australian National University, took up duties as secretary of the Department in March, 1984. He is a past president of the Australian College of Education and has been involved in Catholic education as a parent and on national bodies. He was a pioneer in the group that sought the formation of the ACT Schools Authority and was a foundation member of its 'Accrediting Agency'. His background, therefore, includes all types of schools, tertiary education and conditions for entry.

## FEDERALISM

For many years prior to the election of 1972, the focus of Labor thinking centred on the extension of Federal legislative powers in the interests of 'national planning, and the Party's economic and social objectives'. The Labor Government's educational initiatives during 1972-75 did not suggest the transfer of powers from the States, but did produce, with the flow of Commonwealth general and special purpose grants under s. 96 and s. 51, xxxiiiA, a shift in the locus of control. Mr Whitlam made it clear that 'it would be irresponsible for the national government to content itself with simply providing funds without being involved in the processes by which priorities are set and by which standards are met'. [1]

Neither the Labor Party nor the Schools Commission has considered the relationship of this requirement to the recognition that control must be decentralised. As Graycar has noted: 'The more one supports decentralisation the less likely it is that national planning will take place. The more national planning there is, the less likely this is to be decentralised.' [2]

In 1975, Mr Fraser, as part of his election policy program, presented a doctrine of a 'New Federalism'. The policy was seen as a response to the increasing centralism under the Whitlam Government. The 'package' offered at the Premier's conference in 1976 aimed to give the States more financial and administrative autonomy.

The Fraser Governments differentiated between three types of educational funding: program funds absorbed within general financial assistance measures, so as to leave each State free to decide how and to what extent it carried on a particular activity; block grants which identified the area of expenditure, but left decision as to distribution to the State; specific purpose programs where the Commonwealth had a greater say in the use of the money. [3]

There was an improvement in the process of liaison and consultation with the Schools Commission in which more account was taken of the wishes of the government sector in individual States. According to Dr McKinnon, discussions on how the Commission should operate 'have been very positive, but it would be prudent to doubt the possibility of permanent results... The current congenial relationships which exist do not, in my view, affect basic relationships much.' [4]

The public rhetoric of State Education ministers essentially boiled down to criticism of accountability requirements, and of Federal endeavours to force a redirection of State priorities - as in the debate with Mr Fife over 'transition' funds - or complaint about Federal efforts to force a net increase in State funding. As discussed in Chapter 2, the States have not objected in principle to the funding methods, but rather to lack of flexibility. In 1973, Mr Thompson, the Victorian Minister for Education, expressed concern at the 'strings' attached to grants but, by the end of the decade, he had largely got his way. [5]

McKinnon stressed the importance of deciding whether Commonwealth support was to be based 'upon objective judgments about needs' or 'limited to Commonwealth/State bargaining'. [6] However, the Commission has persisted in allocating most of the money for State school recurrent purposes through 'general' grants; these have not been distributed to the 'disadvantaged' on a 'needs' basis.

The Commonwealth and the Schools Commission have 'huffed and puffed' about 'Accountability', but it is only in the 1980s that the Commission has sought to find solutions.

Senator Baume summarised the constitutional position in a paper given during late 1983:

> ...the Commonwealth still provides approximately one-sixth of total funding for schools, over a quarter of funds for TAFE, and all the funds for universities and CAEs. But when it comes down to tin tacks, it is the State not the Federal Minister for Education who holds real power. A Federal Minister for Education is able to spend more or spend less, but when it comes to the direct exercising of power rather than simply the distribution of funds, nothing can be achieved without the active co-operation of the relevant State minister... A realignment of funding and authority - if, indeed, it is possible - is worthy of consideration.'[7]

This type of argument was similar to the views of Dr McKinnon. In 1979 he stated: 'Some States have always made noises as if there were oppressive conditions attached to the grants.' Where capital and general recurrent grants are concerned, 'States have been free, without legal or other conditions, to use the funds in any way they see fit, and simply to report after the conclusion of each year on the expenditure of these funds. Similarly, in the specific purpose program, they have been able to implement these programs in their own way'. McKinnon was somewhat unhappy at this arrangement and noted that 'the on-cost charge for one program in one State, for example, is 22 per cent of the total value of the program'.[8]

## THE ROLE OF THE COMMONWEALTH

There are certain principles which relate to the Commonwealth interest in and responsibility for the education of Australians.

During and after World War II, the States lost the power to levy income tax; they had to rely on the Commonwealth to underwrite their loan programs; and were subject to various constraints which affected their ability to raise revenue. The Federal Government was providing the major support for State Budgets. It had the responsibility for what economists call 'fiscal equalisation', i.e., for equalising the resources of State Governments so that they could finance the education and other functions for which they have responsibility. Increases in the number of school-age children and increased participation rates occurred at the same time as the development of 'vertical' fiscal imbalance between the Commonwealth and the States. This scenario supplies the background for the campaigns by the Australian Education Council, parent and teacher organisations, and academics during the 1960s. Once the Commonwealth started funding 'needs' in 'an emergency', it was inevitable that its assistance should be sought in meeting further 'unmet needs'.

The Federal Government should have a role in determining national policies on Education. This includes, first, a strong influence on the proportion of Australian educational outlays / expenditure in relation to Gross Domestic Product (GDP). The figure for 'total expenditure' rose from 6.0% (1974-75) to 6.3% (1977-78) and then fell to 5.9% (1980-81).

Trends in 'public sector outlays' showed a slightly greater variation. ('Australian School Statistics', January, 1984, Table 5.8). The Commonwealth's own outlay on schools (as a percentage of its total outlays) doubled in the period 1972-73 to 1982-83. Secondly, the Commonwealth has to protect the rights of minorities where these are neglected by subsidiary authorities - states, local government or the family. The record since 1962 suggests that it is unlikely that disbursement of all funds by the States, rather than the present dual system of Commonwealth/State financing, would lead to greater equity for parents with children in schools of the non-government sector.

In addition, the Commonwealth has special constitutional obligations for the education of aboriginal (s. 51, xxvi) and migrant children (s. 51, xxvii, and under the *Immigration Act 1971*). The High Court has decided that, under s. 51, v, the Commonwealth has the power to use radio and television for education of students. The defence power (s. 51, vi) has taken it into the domain of education. S. 51, xxiiiA, enables it to provide benefits to students; as shown in Chapter 18, the external affairs power (s. 57, xxix) offers a base for legislation on rights in education.[9]

'Fiscal equalisation' to obtain equal 'performance' for government schools in all States and between government and non-government schools is regarded as an expenditure. Performance, however, can only be assessed when specific purpose programs are carefully monitored. General purpose recurrent grants from the Commonwealth may not be used to raise 'performance'; they may be used by the State to divert money into other channels or by a non-government school to reduce fees. In these instances, the assistance operates through revenue which increases the 'capacity' of governments, school systems, schools, or parents to both provide basic educational services and meet other responsibilities. [10]

Senator Ryan has pointed out that 'it is often difficult for large systems to change and for this reason it may well be good policy, whenever possible, to focus additional moneys on the promotion of change...' [11] For this reason, the Federal Government has played, and should continue to play, a role in pioneering special programs, e.g., for aborigines; for handicapped, disadvantaged and outback children; and boarding schools/hostels. This provides better opportunity for ensuring accountability of use of moneys in 'programs'. The expansion of the Education portfolio was seen in the restoration of the National Curriculum Development Centre and, until late 1984, the Minister's responsibility for 'Youth Affairs'.

A central point is that the State education bureaucracies staunchly resist any Commonwealth attempt to hand back 'full' education responsibility to the States. Director Generals of Education are only too well aware that they would find the axe of the State Treasury sharper than that of the Federal Treasury. Secondly, the State Departments of Education have generally favoured 'matching grants' or 'maintenance of effort clauses' because they give them clout in the competition for State Budget funds.

Administrative arrangements over the last decade have provided advantages to both the Schools Commission as a sponsor of ideas and money, and the States as managers. The sponsor can influence and take credit for successes, while avoiding responsibility for failures. The State, the legal operator, has no real duty of accountability to the Commonwealth Government; teacher unions are the 'auditors' who judge the use of money, blaming both the Commonwealth for parsimony and the State for inefficiency in implementation.

Tannock has proposed - in *Recommendations for 1984* - that the Commonwealth should provide a basic recurrent grant for children in all schools at a level of 20 per cent of government school recurrent costs. The present grant for children in government schools is about 7 per cent, and the upgrading would be effected by 'appropriate offsets to the General Revenue Grants to be negotiated with the State'.[12] This move would be no more than a transfer payment under section 96 of the Constitution, but it would express the Commonwealth's equal concern for all children; it would be a start to clarifying the imbalance in funding of the two education sectors; the major State funding going to government schools; the minor Federal grants favouring the non-government student. There would be less fuel to enable distortion in the media and by lobbyists, viz., that Commonwealth funding discriminates against government schools.

### STATE BUDGET RESPONSIBILITY

There is a contrary view which stresses the undesirability of extending Commonwealth activity and of taking any financial responsibility for education from the States. They are closer to the realities, for they decide/agree to conditions of employment, teachers' salaries, etc. The more of the bill they have to pay, the more they will take into account competing demands, e.g., hospitals and public transport, and the need to placate an electorate faced with increasing State taxes and charges. When the Commonwealth takes the initiative in disbursing money to a State for specific educational purposes, there is no guarantee that it is either informed or giving due weight to other necessary expenditures. This, at least, was the argument directed against the Commonwealth Government's 'ad hoc' intervention prior to 1973.

The spendthrift days of the States (1973 to 1980) have gone. The Commonwealth has learnt that there is a limit to the level of taxation that wage earners will accept and that companies can meet; there have been alarming rises in State debt charges; and the State payroll tax is a threat to employment. Victoria's Budget for 1983-84 provided an example of 'economy' when Education was subject to the same 2 per cent cut as other sectors.

## THE AUSTRALIAN EDUCATION COUNCIL[13]

### FOUNDATION AND ACHIEVEMENTS

The Australian Education Council was established in 1936, originally as a meeting of the State Ministers of Education. One should, also, note the membership of the Northern and Australian Capital Territories.

While no recommendations or decisions are binding on members, the Council exercises considerable influence on the development of educational policy in Australia. The Commonwealth Minister attended meetings from the mid-1960s, but did not formally become a member of the Council until 1972. The secretary of the Commonwealth Department of Education and the chairmen of the Tertiary Education and Schools Commissions accompany the Minister to meetings of the AEC. Victoria's Education Minister, Robert Fordham, is the AEC chairman for 1984.

Stockley claims that, from 1977, the Government 'worked consistently to downgrade the Commission's role and to establish the Council as an alternative authority in education'.[14] The AEC, which was given a permanent secretariate, has certainly become an important forum for facilitating Commonwealth/State and State/State co-operation.

Senator Carrick skillfully guided the AEC into programs central to the Commonwealth Government's purposes. For him, the success of the 'new federalism' hinged on definition of objectives, co-operative planning with the States, and on the successful implementation of policies which would raise standards. He believed that it was essential to monitor performance and that 'literacy and numeracy' tests provided a means of assessing national weaknesses in basic skills and among sub-populations with special educational needs. In 1979, he won the support of the AEC in commissioning the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) to undertake a study along the lines of that published in 1975. Unfortunately, the 1975 findings had been given a great deal of publicity, much of it critical of government schools. This generated opposition, in a number of influential quarters, to the whole idea of testing. As a result, the June, 1980 meeting of the AEC agreed that the *Australian Studies in Student Performance* (ASSP) project should be 'externally evaluated'. The findings are summarised in Chapter 26.

Other AEC initiatives included the establishment of a Working Party on Teacher Supply and Demand,; and National Enquiries into Teacher Education and Education, Training and Work. In November, 1983, the Council established a Task Force to consider the use of the education system in anticipating, shaping and responding to technological change. The AEC has encouraged activities of the Curriculum Development Centre; it has committees improving the quality of national educational statistics; it set up a joint expert group to identify issues in Schools Computing, particularly in the area of harmonising hardware/software standards; it has given ministers an opportunity to discuss face-to-face the 'strings' attached to Schools Commission grants. The US *ERIC* (*Educational Resources Information Centre*) Thesaurus is being used as the basis for a compilation of Australian education terms.

The June, 1984 meeting of the AEC considered the future structure of secondary education, including 'senior' secondary colleges; the use of technology in education; and the Participation and Equity Program, with its implications for tertiary education.

As for the future, the present Minister, Susan Ryan, has stated: 'Partnership between the Commonwealth and the States is essential. The historical coincidence of a Commonwealth Government and a large majority of State Governments sharing the same educational objectives makes this partnership more easily attainable.'[15]

## LIMITATIONS

An official brochure states: 'Proceedings of the Australian Education Council Standing Committee are confidential; any public information is based on press releases issued after every meeting.' It is significant that the greatest criticism of this secrecy has come from those associated with the government school sector. For example, Ross Homes, formerly secretary of the Victorian Teachers' Union wrote, when general secretary of the Federation of College Academics: 'The Tertiary Education Commission, a Federal funded body, has consistently refused to release copies of its minutes. So, too, has the Australian Education Council...decisions are not available for public scrutiny.'[16]

Some claim that Freedom of Information Acts have eased the situation. They have been signed by the Commonwealth and Victoria only; enquiries relating to Victoria have to be directed to the relevant Minister and cannot be answered by officers of the AEC; it is almost certain that minutes of meetings would be exempt as 'working' documents. If given one choice, I would seek the impact of teachers' superannuation on real government school expenditures per pupil. Act or no Act, I doubt whether any State would initiate an adequate accounting, because the analysis would indicate a significant under-estimation.

Spaull claims: 'The AEC has been nothing more than a long-standing and prominent interest group in national educational politics.'[17] As shown, this comment must be qualified, but one thing is certain: there is no evidence that the Ministers of Education ever saw a responsibility for the non-government schools - except in so far as their viability related to the successful operation of the State system. No two States have the same principles in funding; most ignore requests for any rationale.

There is cause for concern when, in respect to the AEC's costing of education per pupil in government schools, 'there is an agreement among the States that only the Australian average figures are made available'. In other words, the individual State expenditures have been kept 'secret', which is not consistent with the constant demands for accountability.

Data became available in Victoria from the late 1960s, when questions in Parliament had to be answered. However, Mr Fordham, Minister of Education in the Cain Government, advised the secretary of the VPC on 1 October, 1984: 'As you would realise the Government no longer provides a flat per capita grant system of funding and as such notional statistics of student costs in government schools are no longer calculated. You would also be aware that these statistics have always been open to considerable argument due to debate over the categories of costs that should be included in the calculation.'

There can be no satisfaction until the actual expenditures per pupil in government systems are presented promptly by accounting methods common to all States. A working party presented a progress report to the June, 1984 meeting of the AEC. Recurrent costs can be itemised in a relatively simple form. They should be presented per pupil, per schooling Year; non-government schools have to do these 'sums' to remain solvent. The analysis should be made available at Budget time.

When using the current measures in Victoria, the estimates for the last five financial years have been lower than the actual expenditures; see Table. Increases come from overflow in recurrent, not in capital expenditure.

ESTIMATES AND ACTUAL EXPENDITURES ON SCHOOLING: VICTORIA

| $ *m* | Est | Actual | $ *m* | Est | Actual |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1979-80 | 1125.5 | 1140.7 | 1981-82 | 1407.5 | 1484.1 |
| 1980-81 | 1275.4 | 1290.9 | 1982-83 | 1743.3 | 1805.1 |
|  |  |  | 1983-84 | 1864.3 | 1933.0 |

## TERTIARY EDUCATION

The Commonwealth provides 100% of funding for higher education; 50% of recurrent funding for technical and further education, about 19% for primary and secondary education, and a small amount for pre-school education. This monograph is not concerned with tertiary education as such. However, for three reasons, it cannot be neglected.

First, tertiary institutions are now entirely reliant on Federal funding without the support of State Budgets or student fees; as a result they have lost much of their independence. For example, direct Commonwealth action has reduced the number of engineering schools and has forced amalgamations of universities and Colleges of Advanced Education (CAEs); new courses are not funded without the approval of the Universities Council.

Secondly, in the modern world, primary education is a stepping stone to secondary education, and secondary credentials are the means of entrance into tertiary institutions.

Thirdly, there is the question of consistency in the application of principle. To quote Maximilian Walsh, the feeless university was, of all reforms of the Whitlam Government, 'probably the most expensive and the most inequitable... Ask Senator Ryan, the Minister for Education, who has decided to demonstrate her radical credentials by establishing a hit-list of posh private schools, how she justifies the concept of free university education for the financially privileged of society and you will be treated to an essay in waffle.' [18] There has been little change in the balance of the socio-economic classes moving from secondary to tertiary level education. Barry Jones, Minister for Science and Technology, even claims that 'it is post codes which determine life chances'! [19]

D.S. Anderson and A.E. Vervoorn of the Australian National University, J. Western in Queensland, and analysts at Melbourne and Monash Universities, have shown that university intakes favour students from independent non-Catholic schools, particularly into prestige faculties such as medicine.[20] Entrance to CAEs, part-time studies and post-secondary technical education shows more equal access among different groups. Admittedly, not all eligible students take a tertiary option. The most interested applicants are males, children of migrants, and students from city areas.

To quote Terrence Dunn, 'several authors have discussed the question of the fairness of HSC results to lower socio-economic status groups when used to select entrants to universities'. He analysed Arts and Science (1975, 1976, 1978) data in the University of Melbourne; Terry Hore and Leo West examined three Monash intakes (1975, 1980, 1982). Both studies reached the conclusion that the first-year university performance of students from government schools was better than that of students from non-government schools with the same HSC score. Both papers suggested that fair selection procedures require that a lower cut-off be used for State school applicants than for independent school applicants. For Dunn, 'the most compelling causal hypothesis is the over-training one. That is, students at independent schools have their HSC results enhanced by the additional resources and attention provided so that not all of their HSC performance reflects potential for university study.' Why 'over-training'? Is it not possible to give credit to dedicated educators who provide opportunities for students of average ability?[21]

In addition, certain questions need to be answered: Are the correlations confirmed in subsequent years of study? What is the relationship between HSC/first-year tertiary performance for different, including selective, schools in each sector? Assuming State school students do better at university, could it be that they have been 'favoured' compared with students in 'average' Catholic schools whose earlier education was associated with 71% of government school recurrent resources? What is the socio-economic status of university entrants from each sector? What is the status of those who are most successful at university level? Is it equitable to discriminate against applicants solely on the basis of the type of school they attend, without reference to their family circumstances?[22]

The treatment will now be confined to financial considerations. In an address on 2 May, 1984, Professor Karmel saw the necessity for introducing fees for those whose parents have the capacity to pay. Students from poor families would not pay fees and would benefit from higher Tertiary Education Assistance Scheme (TEAS) allowances. (The 1984 Federal Budget increased the maximum payment from $62.25 to $68.87 per week and eased the means-test level.) Karmel doesn't 'see it as a mechanism for funding the operation of the institutions but of redistributing income to support poor students'.[23] This advantage must be weighed against the disadvantages: difficulty in providing an equitable means-test, provision of a bureaucracy to administer it, the political reaction of those above the income barrier, inequities between single and two-income families, and the effectiveness of a scheme, depending on parents' attitudes as well as incomes. For example, an increasing number of parents are unwilling to accept responsibility for supporting their children.

Michael Porter, director of the Centre of Policy Studies at Monash University, argues that the tertiary sector is highly protected, over-regulated, inefficient and costly. He considers that we should 'reduce the role of government in our education institutions and move towards the payment of fees corresponding to costs of education, using part of the sums raised to fund and introduce scholarships and loan arrangements for those in need'.[24]

Karmel considers that the provision of extra money / resources in government schools could not be justified. In view of the 60 per cent increase in real operating resources of primary schools in the last decade - more than meeting the standards he had called for - it was 'simply not good enough that significant numbers of children enter secondary schools without the skills to cope with secondary studies'.[25]

Smart maintains that if the education cake is to be kept constant, the time has come for re-distribution in favour of the tertiary sector. Any policy which keeps students at school must involve expansion and greater funding of the tertiary sector. According to Smart, 'the overcrowding, neglect of buildings and equipment maintenance, shortages of basic research equipment, deteriorating student-staff ratios are all well documented'.[26]

The Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission (CTEC) report for 1985 recommended an increase of 6.6%; the Minister, Senator Ryan, responded on 5 July, 1984 in 'Guidelines to the CTEC for the 1985-87 triennium'. The Government set the increase at 2.9% - 2.8% for universities and colleges and 3.8% for TAFE, which is only partly funded by the Commonwealth. In 1985, TAFE is to receive $34m. under the 'Participation and Equity Program', an increase of $4m. in real terms. 'Participation and Equity in tertiary education' is a recurring theme in the Guidelines. Senator Ryan said that priority for tertiary places must be given to school-leavers rather than mature-age students. She endorsed 'the Commission's proposals for supporting the participation of Aborigines and women...for applicants from less favoured school and home backgrounds...' The Minister called on CETC to consider higher education in terms of skills related to employment and, after seeking further support from the private sector, to direct research into avenues enabling economic development and technological change.[27]

In 1982, only 1.5 per cent of funds for research came from industry. Professor Don Stranks, the vice-chancellor of Adelaide University, has pointed out that, where support has been modest in times of economic plenty, it is unlikely that it will grow in times of stress. There were, also, limits to the extent that staff and equipment could be diverted to consultantcies at the expense of teaching and other research functions.[28]

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10. See R. Mathews (1983).

11. Ryan, S. Address, 8 May, 1983, to the AEC.

12. CSC. Recommendations for 1984, p.9.

13. AEC. 46th meeting, 4-6 May, 1984. Background Notes.

14. Stockley, D., 'Political ideologies and Australian education', in Browne and Foster (eds), p. 55.

15. Ref 11, op. cit.

16. Homes, R. The Age, 20 November, 1980.

17. Spaull, A., 'Education', in Patience and Head (eds), p. 136.

18. Walsh, M. 'Free uni education part of Labor's cultural cringe', The Age, 10 April, 1984. The Labor Party has rejected suggestions for change by student loans (see Mathews, ref 10, p. 67) or fees.

19. The Australian. 'Postcode not technology, "decides a person's future"', 17 May, 1984.

20. Anderson, D.S. and A.E. Vervoorn (1983).

21. Dunn, T. 'An empirical demonstration of bias in HSC examination results', The Australian Journal of Education, 26, no. 2, 1982. T. Hore and L. West, 'Access and Equity', mimeo, Monash University, 1984, and 'Standards, scores and students', Education News, 18, no. 12, October, 1984. See, also, G. Maslen, 'HSC score biased against State pupils, says study', The Age, 30 September, 1982. G. Partington, 'Opportunities more equal than others', The Bulletin, 30 October, 1984, offers a hostile critique of Dunn.

P. Baume, CPD, pp. 2925-2930, discusses the upgrading of scores of female students by the ACT Schools Authority on the ground that 'they showed much less confidence in success than males'. The suggestion of Hugh Hudson, chairman of CTEC, for adjustment of HSC marks of poor and Aboriginal students considers the personal background of each applicant and is not the same issue.

22. The overall retention rate in Catholic schools is higher than in State schools; see table 5.2, Report for the Triennium 1982-84. The relative retention of low income groups may be higher in Catholic schools; see Mortensen (1977), pp. 33-34, 46-47. The clientele of a school should be examined separately from Years 7 to 12.

23. Trinca, Helen. The Australian (3 & 9 May). Henderson (The Age, 10 October, 1979) claimed that universities should charge fees because the great majority of students were from rich or middle class families'. Cf. the comment of Barry Hill (The Age, 12 June, 1975): 'A distinctly proportionate slice of our massive education budget goes to the minority of tertiary students who also happen to be from the most socially and educationally "advantaged" sectors of society.' Trinca (The Australian, 20, 21 & 23 November, 1984) considers papers arguing for fees to re-distribute help to students and inject 'some entrepreneurial spirit' into tertiary education.

24. Porter, M. 'Tertiary education...' Institute of Public Affairs Review, Winter, 1984, 38, no.2.

25. Karmel, P. in Trinca (ref 23), 3 May, 1984.

26. Smart, D. 'Institutions are ill-equipped to handle more tertiary students', The Australian, 30 May, 1984.

27. See Education News, 18, no. 11, August, 1984 for 'Funding of tertiary education for the 1985-87 triennium', an edited version of the Minister's statement; note, also, her letter to The Age, 25 August, 1984. R. Manne and M. James, 'Head counting and higher education' (Australian Society, March, 1984) criticised the quality of entrants into humanities and social sciences at La Trobe University. The April issue has a response, 'The view from Canberra', by Senator Ryan. The mood of some university staff is evident in the title of an article by Sally White, 'Equality and Excellence: can education have both?', The Age, 18 September, 1984. Susan Ryan, delivering the Calwell lecture at Monash University Labor Club on 19 September, 1984, denied that the Government was impinging on academic freedom. However, she said, 'I am not persuaded the tertiary sector as a whole, or many of its component institutions, have been doing all they might to either work out what they mean by quality or to set about improving it'.

28. Dawson, C. 'Commercial uni ventures "not a threat to scholarship"', The Australian, 22 August, 1984. For a comparative statement of Federal election Party policies, see 'The big questions in higher education', The Australian, 28 November, 1984.

# 11 Commonwealth Schools Commission

## TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Commonwealth Schools Commission was established as a statutory body by the Schools Commission Act 1973 (no. 213). The central clauses of the Act are 13 (4a): the primary obligation...for governments to provide and maintain government school systems that are of the highest standard and are open, without fees or religious tests, to all children; and 13 (4b): the prior right of parents to choose whether their children are educated at a government or at a non-government school. Dr K.R. McKinnon, the first chairman, noted (in 1983); 'Although the sub-clauses had no mandatory financial consequence, their presence established ambiguity about the legislature's intention, leaving the Commission open to charges from both sides of the state-aid dispute of either partisanship or of not carrying out its proper role.' [1] Nevertheless, the competition and potential contradiction inherent in the clauses attracted little philosophical or legal debate.

The Commission carries out its responsibilities through its general resources and specific purpose programs, for which funds are provided in the *States Grants (Schools Assistance) Act 1983*,and the *States Grants (Education Assistance - Participation and Equity) Act 1983*.These Acts specify the funds to be provided, and associated conditions set by the Commonwealth, for government and non-government schools.

McKinnon has described the Commission's function as 'a planning agency, not an executing agency; it is dependent on other educational authorities for effective implementation of its programs'. One might be less sanguine about a second comment that 'there can be no suggestion...of Commission take-over of school systems or remote control'. It shows little understanding of the steady erosion effected by the ever-growing enquiries associated with 'needs' funding in the non-government sector, and the role that the Commission might occupy in administering Ministerial guidelines. It is increasingly a regulatory body and as John Stone says, 'as a public servant with 30 years experience, I can tell you a regulatory body is just a bench of people sitting down at a table which becomes a bench with quasi-legal clothing. But it has power...' [2] In the late 1980s, the history of small or expanding new non-government schools, lacking the support of a 'system', will show how much power.

According to Dr McKinnon, the preparation of Commission reports is 'a long exhausting process... Members of the Secretariate prepare papers... From the discussion of these papers there frequently emerges what appears to be a Commission view.' The policies then have to be developed, integrated and reconciled with other value positions. [3] As chairman, McKinnon was responsible for three reports for 'rolling triennia': for 1976-78 submitted to Mr Beazley; for 1979-81 to Senator Carrick; and for 1982-84 to Mr Fife.

Following the Labor Government's practice in 1975, the Fraser Governments gave the Commission 'guidelines' within which to submit 'a report'. The Minister for Education, after consideration of the Commonwealth Schools Commission's previous triennial report, made a submission to Cabinet in December - January, prepared the Guidelines in April, and released them in mid-year. The Commission's subsequent report came out in August - September. It recommended the State-by-State allocations within the Budget parameters and outlined how other 'guidelines' were to be implemented. This report was quite distinct from other 'advisory' reports of the CSC.

These processes meant that the Government had the normal function of determining priorities and appropriations within the Budget, and that the Commission met its statutory responsibility of advising on needs, mainly through its triennial reports but, also, by criticism within the annual reports.

Particular reference will be made to a critique offered by the late David Bennett. He was a widely respected, 'Labor oriented', full-time commissioner from 1973 to 1980. He was given the task of implementing the 'Innovations' program which, according to Hedley Beare of Melbourne University, 'he stamped with a character peculiarly his own'. The main burden of preparation of the 'Discussion Paper' *School to Work* (September, 1977) also fell on Bennett. When referring to his chapter in *Labor Essays (1982)*, Beare remarks: 'The same restlessness and questioning of the status quo permeate that essay; he expresses disappointment at the effects of Schools Commission funding and argued that Labor policy on education needed substantial re-working.' [4]

Bennett noted: 'Most of the funds provided to the State systems from 1973 onwards simply disappeared without trace into State treasuries. In general the Commission has not been able to control the use of the funds it provides and accountability has been largely a joke.' [5]

## ORGANISATION OF THE COMMISSION

The structure of the Commission has consisted of chairman, secretary, and branches which were grouped under assistant secretaries. From February, 1984, following the recommendation of the Commonwealth Public Service Board, the organisation has been based on the restored Curriculum Development Centre under a Director, and on three other divisions - 'General Resource Programs', 'Specific Purpose Programs', and 'Operations and Resources' - under First Assistant Commissioners. The last named division is responsible for the provision of secretariate functions and co-ordination of the Commission's activity. Mr Ian Hossack, the former secretary, has assumed responsibility for the 'General Resources Division', which includes policy development, and general recurrent / capital grant programs.

Prior to 1981, the Curriculum Development Centre had been a statutory body within the Education portfolio. In 1981, when the States refused to participate by 50% funding, the CDC was dissolved and its responsibilities transferred to the Department. The Labor pre-election platform included the re-constitution of the CDC within the Schools Commission; this necessitated the passing of an Amendment Bill (1984) to the 1973 Act. The Opposition accepted the amendment in principle.

Ms Lindsay Connors is the chairperson of the Curriculum Development Council which, through its re-activated Centre under Mr Garth Boomer, is initiating studies on: sport and girls; an Italian community languages program; Aboriginal oral histories in the Kimberley region, and word processing. Other projects are being negotiated with the States, e.g., in mathematics; Australian studies; Aboriginal languages and mathematical learning; and peace education. Following decisions of the Minister, the Council will be concerned with computer education and the Participation and Equity (PEP) program. Ms Connors has made some interesting reflections on policies that will be pursued: the rejection of demands from sections of the community which 'want to turn schools into repositories for every bit of social guilt'; the introduction of 'peace studies' as a part of normal course work so that students may see the place of integrity, goodwill and communication in the resolution of conflicts; avoidance of emphasis on how schooling confers power and status, and inevitably wealth - a preoccupation of the teacher unions.[6]

A continuing part of the Commission, with a vital role in the non-government sector, is the Planning and Finance Committee in each State. Each makes recommendations to the Commission about the distribution of general recurrent funds to non-systemic schools and reports on the application of the needs principle in the distribution of block subsidy grants for systemic schools. For the Capital Grants Program, the committees establish priorities based on educational and financial needs. They recommend the allocation of grants under the Specific Purpose Programs. According to Dr McKinnon, writing in 1983, the P&FCs have 'worked rather well'.[7]

## DEPARTMENTAL PROCEDURES

A Commission report is only the beginning. It is presented to the Minister who, through the departmental sieve, decides what will be presented to Cabinet in the policy recommendations prior to the Budget. At that stage, the central co-ordinating agencies - Finance, Treasury, and the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet - make significant inputs. When the Budget is being finalised, the Department of Finance has the opportunity to bring forward to Cabinet papers reviewing the existing programs.

## THE COMMISSION: SUCCESS OR FAILURE?

### Criteria

It is idle to talk of the Commonwealth Schools Commission's 'success or failure' unless we establish some criteria. The public goals are set out in the 1973 Act; the 'hidden' goals are to be found in the pre-election manifestos (1972 and 1983) of the ALP. Another perspective is to examine this public and political material critically and, one would hope, objectively and then consider whether the Schools Commission has been 'a good thing'. Needless to say, those receiving benefits tend to concentrate on their own problems. They provide 'lobbies' with varying policies and judge the Commission by its performance in meeting them. Unfortunately, the criteria are often money flows rather than the clarity with which principles of equity are spelt out and applied.

Two views of the Commission can be presented. Both have substance.

First, the Commission has been attacked on three grounds: it has not fought for high academic standards; it has frustrated the principle of freedom of choice; and, through the needs principle, it has produced dependence upon politicians and bureaucrats.[8]

An alternative and, for me, more attractive view - considering what would have happened in the Commission's absence - is that it has been associated with the achievement of some consensus and partial solution of the 'State Aid' debate. It has worked to increase co-operation between State/Catholic/other independent schools, including the joint use of resources. It has promoted openness in the collection of hard data; it has initiated a large number of valuable programs; and it has acted as an agency for the promotion of knowledge, discussion, and debate about educational matters or issues.

This comment does not imply that the raw data have always been comprehensive or that argument has been from sound premises and presented with a consistency applied to all schools equitably and based on common principles. Schools Commission practice in using percentage funding increases to compare this or that school sector or non-government group has been misleading. It should be discontinued or, alternatively, accompanied by a statement of money amounts. In addition, one can only be critical of funding formulae used in the non-government sector. They tend to greater and greater complexity; they are not associated with the means of individual parents. They penalise every attempt to improve the quality of education; in the government sector, parent contributions are encouraged, even subsidised. It is fascinating to find that my long-held judgment is also that of Dr McKinnon when he refers (in 1983) to 'the insufficiencies and inequities which are with us today, because no government has wanted the real issues of the needs scheme, particularly the matter of comparability of conditions, to be subjected to public scrutiny and debate.'[9]

It is unfortunate that the Schools Commission did not offer a more complete statement of funding sources: Commonwealth, State, and 'private contributions' in both capital and recurrent areas, until publication of *Recommendations for 1984*. This combination has been the key data, and failure to give it earlier prominence has provided a major opportunity for those who presented a biased picture by excluding all reference to State Budgets. Except in one instance, where Ian Hossack, the secretary of the Commission, intervened by a letter to the press, distortions have been allowed to pass.[10]

According to Bennett, 'in the four financial years to 1979-80 the States increased their recurrent expenditure on state schools in real terms by 23.3 per cent... The Commission in fact soon abandoned any pretence that it could apply the needs policy to the States'.[11]

Such statements, doubtless, bewilder those who accept the conventional wisdom offered on TV generally, in some daily newspapers, and in books by academics which purport to describe the educational scene, yet ignore this issue. Some explanation is necessary. The problem lies in different use of the word 'need'. In the non-government sector, a school has 'needs' if it possesses low 'recurrent resources'. In the government sector, a school is in 'need' if it is 'disadvantaged'. For example, Hogan, interpreting Table 10.2 of *Report for 1984*, shows that government schools, receiving 47.3% of Commonwealth programs, obtained 24.1% in 'general recurrent grants', 12.0% in capital grants, and only 2.2% for 'disadvantaged schools'; admittedly, much of 3.1% for PEP, 3.9% for 'English as second language' (ESL) would have found its way into such schools.[12] Van Davy, speaking at the June, 1984 NCIS conference, noted, correctly, that 'general recurrent grants is the bucket from which the big battalions are paid'. One may accept his assessment of staffing 'needs' for the education of all government school children, but it is, also, pertinent to state that there was little flow for the needs of 'disadvantaged' children in this sector.

In dealing with the non-government sector, both the Karmel Committee and the Schools Commission experts have been naive in relating what they considered to be desirable educational resources in a school with the capacity of parents to pay fees to finance such resource levels. Low resource schools are still of low resource compared with the government sector, because school authorities have obviously balanced the realities of income, including the capacity of parents to pay fees, against acceptable 'outputs'. 'Maintenance/increase of effort' so that Catholic schools obtain higher resources will exclude the poor; it would be the equivalent of the 'hit-list' in the non-Catholic sector.

In addition, the Commission has no clear policy or methodology on evaluation of its programs. It has never sought to compare schools on the basis of money 'inputs', effort, and educational 'outcomes'.

Where Labor's 1969 policy and the Karmel Report were concerned with raising all schools to *minimum* standards, Bennett claimed: 'In its last report the Schools Commission rather foolishly tried to make the problem disappear by turning the Whitlam policy on its head. It in effect determined a *maximum* resource standard by pretending that it had found a way of "deciding how much money an authority or school needs" (SC 1981, 4.11), and then recommended that the Commonwealth should not help any school to exceed that standard. At the same time it inconsistently continued to assert that the needs of schools at any particular time are simply "dependent on the community's view" at that time "and its expectation of the way [the schools] should operate" (4.3), thus admitting that no rational basis exists for determining such a standard.'[13] The link between the Commission's presentation and Labor's current concept of 'community standard' is obvious.

## EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY

The Schools Commission has expressed itself on a variety of topics - right, choice, needs - but in no great depth. Its statistical interpretations of attainment of targets and of 'standard costs' have been performed with skill. It has attempted to assess what 'maintenance of effort' is possible in the non-government sector and, to a much lesser extent, the capacity of State Budgets to finance government schools. This section confines its attention to an introductory study of Commission thinking on 'equality of opportunity'.

According to McKinnon, the Commission had 'the task of unravelling the intricacies' of three different principles: spend the same amount on each student; give everyone equal access, even if the costs per student vary; or spend unequally on each student so that the inequalities of starting differences can be overcome.[14]

The Interim Committee valued 'the principle that the standard of schooling a child receives should not depend on what his parents are able or willing to contribute directly to it, or whether he is enrolled in a government or non-government institution (2.7)'. This concept - applied mainly in the non-government sector - was the basis of needs-based funding of school resources. The Committee also judged 'that some altering of the balance of expenditure in favour of earlier stages of education to consolidate a more equal basic achievement between children is desirable (2.9)'. Again, the application of this principle had more impact in the non-government sector.

The Committee considered that, in Australia, 'equality has been interpreted as equal access to schools of roughly equal standards (3.1)'. It hoped to improve 'equality of outcomes', but recognised the danger of an expensive 'doctrinaire pursuit' in which there was only one criterion of excellence - an academic one - assuming that 'everyone should value the same thing (3.22)'. It believed that 'schools can influence, but alone cannot determine, educational outcomes (3.24)', and that 'more equal outcomes from schooling require unequal treatment of children (3.19)'. The latter principle was the basis of the Report's 'disadvantaged schools' program.[15]

Schools Commission reports regarded equality as 'educational provision responsive to the needs of children (June, 1975: 2.5)'. They sought 'a basic plateau of competence' (ibid.), 'the basic credentials which give the possibility of occupational choice (July, 1976: 2.11)'.

The Commission considered equality of opportunity from the point of view of the individual and of the stratification of society (1976: 2.2; 2.7). It claimed that it neither sought nor favoured 'equal educational' or 'the same' outcomes (1976: 2.14; 1981: 2.4). The 'egalitarian' principle was, therefore, rejected. In addition, the Commission stated that the 'power of education to change the relative position of social groups has proved small in all advanced societies (1976: 2.4)', that 'the traditional distribution of life chances...remains unchanged. The pattern is repeated from generation to generation (March, 1981: 2.4)'.

McKinnon and Hancock accept that 'schools have limited impact on social mobility', but consider that 'current evidence about the effectiveness of schools only deals with what has been, not with what might be'.[16] This hopeful, but rather unscientific, assessment is associated with a reluctance to examine in depth low resource sub-systems, including the Catholic, which have shown a remarkable capacity to generate 'social mobility'.[17] This is not to deny that 'children of parents in high socio-economic groups are likely to have the double advantage of confident expectation and of greater intellectual stimulation...' (1976: 2.17). It is not to claim that success with an ethnic or social class is ever immediate or that the same environment will stimulate each individual, including siblings, equally. For example, the road to success of many a young Catholic in the 1920s and 1930s was via Public Service entrance examinations and part-time tertiary study. Their children now enter tertiary institutions direct from school.

This experience might suggest to us the truth of a statement of L.F. Neal. He was commenting on the *Commission of Enquiry into Poverty (Fifth Main Report, 1976)*. He noted that it did 'invaluable service in carefully documenting the poor child, the child at risk'. However: 'Poverty is not the only culprit - it never turned the Scots from education. Pop culture - the hedonistic pursuit of quick money and quick sex - turns scores of young people away from education, whether in State or private schools. Education is concerned with the good life; pop culture is concerned with the good time.'[18] In other words, where character and self-discipline are developed within the school environment, there is much greater chance of the student's educational success - irrespective of his/her social class.

'Another major aspect of equality of opportunity concerns the right of individuals to be treated differently according to their interests and abilities' (1981: 2.7). Within the limits of the responsibility for group instruction, most teachers have long sought to do this. As the Commission notes, teachers 'are the experts in terms of knowledge of the students they teach, of the possibilities of the locality for learning purposes , of what works or does not work in their situation...' (April, 1978: 1.6).

The first report of the Commission considered that 'schooling is not a race; its major objective is not to identify winners and losers' (1976: 2.4). Such statements appear compassionate but, if true, why should one bother about remedial instruction for weak students and discrimination in favour of the disadvantaged; or about 'School Improvement Programs', which have the aim of turning losers into winners? Why provide stimulus for the gifted, with exclusion of those who do not quite make the grade? Then, again, the Commission is never clear as to aim: to achieve equal opportunity with stratification according to merit; or to obtain equal representation from sub-groups - including both sexes - in the social and occupational strata?[19]

The Karmel report hoped that schooling could become 'enjoyable and satisfying in its own right... The school does not exist to grade students for employers or for institutes of higher learning' (3.25). There was nothing on the creation of an educational environment in which the poor could compete with 'advantaged' groups. John Embling, the author of *Tom* and director of the 'Families in Distress Foundation', states: 'I suspect those who want to give kids free choice in subject matter. They merely play with the lives of kids who are often already disadvantaged.'[20] Geoffrey Partington asks: 'Do they agree with Plato that most of our children lack the capacity for significant knowledge, that they are basically genetically thick? Do the Schools Commission and other seekers of alternatives to education agree...that the folk ways of the working class stifle intellectual interest in their children and make them unfit for literary, mathematical or scientific knowledge. Let's at least be clear who the real elitists are.'[21] Marva Collins, who runs a fine school for black children in a Chicago slum, does not believe in education being directly related to the 'life style' of families. 'I don't want to hear any jive talk in here or any of this stuff about Black English,' she declared.[22]

Government selective high schools have been a powerful means of encouraging gifted students in Australia. They should be encouraged where they offer opportunities to those from poor families and where they accept all students living in close proximity to the school.

The Commission's reports have made only vague statements about the content of education in the motivation or the development of personality and character of students. For example, what can one make of the following statement: 'Greater equality of educational outcomes begins in a view of schooling the aim of which is to pass increased responsibility over to the learner with his increasing competence, with the objective that he will ultimately take major responsibility for organising himself and will be assisted to find relevance to the present in the past achievements of the human mind' (1975: 2.7; cf. 2.10).[23]

## SCHOOL AND WORK

The 'Discussion Paper' *School and Work* (1977) noted that schools were 'developing more flexible structures by allowing a wider degree of choice in the curriculum, by modifying student - teacher relationships...and by bringing students and the school itself into closer contact with the wider society'. However, 'a concern with personal development often seems to lead in opposite directions from the demand for individual success...to structure the curriculum so as to exclude many students from the competition is to deny them the opportunities they are seeking. On the other hand, to allow them to remain in the competition while still maintaining the same intellectual standards will produce a high rate of failure. There are also important confusions about the schools' role with respect to values, especially for government schools.'

'It is true that the students might have worked with more purpose and determination if they had developed career goals. On the other hand, the achievement of these goals would be dependent on success in an educational enterprise unrelated to any occupation... The great variety and unpredictability of individual needs in contemporary society provide strong support for the proposition that schooling should develop a set of abilities likely to prove useful in a great variety of situations...' The 'Paper' deplored the dismantling of 'career ladders' which would enable workers to move from lower to higher levels.

'Care should also be taken to ensure that schemes of work experience do not perform the same functions as streaming or courses of vocational education... Work experience should...provide all students with a wider understanding of society and the world of work...'

## THE INDEPENDENCE OF THE COMMISSION

Mr K.E. Beazley made eloquent pleas that education should be taken out of politics, particularly the appointment of members of the Commission, whom he claimed should be noted for their impartiality and balance, not for their identification with organisations with which they had previous association.[24] McKinnon noted that 'several of the members appointed by the Labor Government were re-appointed for second terms by the Liberal-Country Party Government'.[25] Nevertheless, the issues have remained firmly entrenched in politics - largely as a result of pressure from the State school teacher and parent lobby, and the Socialist Left of the Labor Party.

### Claims

In September, 1982, Mr Dawkins, then Labor spokesman, alleged that the Commission is a 'self deluded and enfeebled organisation' and that 'the process of cloning has been complete'.[26] When Senator Ryan became Minister, she stated: 'The work of the Schools Commission has been undermined during the past seven years, partly because some of its central strategies have been superseded with the passage of time.' [27]

According to *The Age*: 'Labor believes the Commission, as it is, lacks the "adventurism and independence" to carry out its original role.'[28] Robert Bluer, the general secretary of the ATF, claimed that 'the Commission had not been effective since 1977'.[29] *School Bell* stated that 'VICCSO's major criticism of the Fraser approach was that it sought to undermine the independence of the Schools Commission'.[30] Maslen, in his book *School Ties*, maintained that 'under its new chairman, Dr Peter Tannock, and with limits placed on its former activities, the Commission is now seen more as a policy arm of government than an independent statutory authority'.[31] Labor's aim was reported as making 'the Schools Commission into a broadly representative and independent body which will have the unfettered right to report publicly - without prescriptive Government Guidelines - on the needs of public and private education'. The Guidelines were not to be 'of the kind issued by the Fraser Government'. [32]

Hon R. Free, MHR, secretary of the Caucus Social Policy Committee, stated that Commonwealth grants to high resource schools 'will be phased out - but in a way that will not harm the schooling of any child or the livelihood of any teacher... The Government will also be reviewing...the capacity of school communities...' [33] It is hard to see how *these ends can be achieved except by higher fees all-round and some* form of 'means testing'.

I am more concerned here with his comment on the role of the Schools Commission: 'We have taken steps already to make the Commission more broadly representative... We will reinstate the Commission's capacity to provide information and advice on the needs of schools... The Commission will have an unfettered right to report publicly on needs and priorities... The Government will provide guidelines...to designate its particular funding priorities...' [34] In other words, the Commission was to have a more fulfilling role than during the six years of the Coalition, which were presented by Labor opponents as a wilderness.

### Facts

What are the facts? First, the Government's Guidelines were/are, a Government's considered decision, based on budgetary / political grounds, to earlier recommendations of the Schools Commission. These were initially confidential reports; now, they are published annually prior to the Budget (new policy) deliberations. On the other hand, when the former Commonwealth Bureau of Roads prepared 'roads needs studies' similar to those of the Schools Commission, these were not released and Government decisions were not announced until the Budget speech. Education now differs from other services in this essential respect. The purpose of the education Guidelines released in May / June (or in 1984 on 14 August after the ALP July conference) was to allow the States / non-government school authorities time to schedule resources / to set fees in time for the new school year.

While the Commission had to work within Coalition guidelines, it was uninhibited in criticising them in its annual reports. In addition, it was 'unfettered' in its presentation of reports for the triennia. This assessment was supported in 1980 by Dr McKinnon himself when he stated: 'The Schools Commission by its Act is obliged to report on needs. It does this regularly and freely. There have been no governmental constraints... The Commission has always been and continues to be independent as an advisory body...governments properly make policy and final decisions.' [35] If, according to Sue Green, education reporter for *The Age*, there was a 'stormy history of battles over its independence from the Federal Government',[36] it was a dissident opinion of the ATF and ACSSO unable to enforce their wills, not an official view of the Chairman of the Commission.

The importance of the issue warrants quotation from Dr McKinnon (1979) again:

> Soon after the Commission was established, the then Minister, Mr Kim Beazley, said that any formal Ministerial direction to the Commission would be in writing and be able to be made public. The present Minister, Senator J.G. Carrick, has adopted the same

> practice. There have been very few such communications, other than the financial Guidelines which are also publicly announced in Parliament. None of them have limited, in any way, the Commissions's ability to report needs within the framework of the Schools Commission Act.
>
> Much is said in the media about the independence of the Commission. The Commission is certainly independent in giving advice. It is only useful if it maintains that independence. Ministers are usually fairly resigned to receiving advice that they do not want, or do not want at a particular time. The Commission has never shrunk from carrying out the requirements of its legislation and Ministers have, I think, been willing to consider that advice even when it did not suit them... If this convention were not strong, the concept of a Commission would become progressively less sustainable. The Commission, for its part, has to demonstrate that its advice is socially and economically literate, as well as educationally sound.[37]

Dr Tannock has spoken in much the same terms: 'The Commission has always been autonomous, independent, able to make its own judgments. Advisory bodies lose a good deal of their effectiveness if the advice they give is foolish or incomprehensible or totally beyond the capacity of Governments to implement, or totally beyond the tolerance of the community. So you have to be sensible and exercise common sense.' [38]

Secondly, Senator Ryan's Guidelines of 28 July, 1983, were also restrictive, and - as Senator Carrick has pointed out - inconsistent with Labor Party demands, when in Opposition, that 'the Commission should be given a free hand'.[39] He noted that the Schools Commission made 57 recommendations 'for 1984'; the Labor Government rejected 9, did not respond to 12, reviewed 2, deferred 3, and modified 11.[40]

In addition, the Commission's *Options for Commonwealth Funding of General Recurrent Resources for Australian Schools* was not 'a spirited analysis of the 'Government's directions (1.3)', of 'the Government's objectives as expressed in the Guidelines (2.5)', and of 'stated policies for all schools in the non-government sector (2.6.9)'. The Commission focussed 'on a relatively limited range of options which are...consistent with the 'Government's guidelines... (4.10)'. Ten years before, I had noted McKinnon's statement that, on the one hand, 'conservatism...restricts the range of discussion' but that, on the other, the aims of non-government lobbyists were 'inescapably implying re-examination of the whole system'! [41]

During the proceedings of the Senate Estimates Committee on 3 May, 1984. Senator Teague asked two questions. First, 'What steps has the Minister taken to change the relationship of the Schools Commission to the Government during her time as Minister?' and 'Does the Minister regard the Commission as independent of the Government?'. Senator Ryan replied that the Commission was a statutory body and that there had been no changes in its Act. Secondly, Teague asked representatives of the Commission whether 'in the research and formulation of *Funding Proposals for Australian Schools* (April, 1984) the point of departure was the guidelines issued by the Minister in July, 1983. Dr J. McMorrow replied, 'essentially'. When Teague asked: 'Does the Schools Commission perceive any heightened or reduced independence in relation to government since the change of government?', Senator Ryan objected to this question being directed to officers of the Commission; comment should be sought from commissioners.[42]

Thirdly, in the latter half of 1983, the membership of the Commission was weighted against the non-government sector - by the exclusion of a person with knowledge of the needs and aspirations of non-government school parents and by the rejection of Father Williams, the NCEC's preferred nominee. Ms Lindsay Connors - described by Joan Corbett, general secretary of the ACT Teachers' Federation, as 'a long-time activist and supporter of government education' - was appointed a full-time commissioner.[43] When Archbishop T.V. Cahill of Canberra-Goulburn stated in 1975: 'It remains Australian Government policy to provide assistance for non-government schools to help them offer an alternative education from the Government systems', Ms Connors pointed out that he had got Labor Party policy and 'the spirit of the Karmel report' all wrong. They were 'based on the needs of children, not on any obligation to provide alternatives to the government system at public expense'.[44]

It might be claimed that any imbalance in representation was rectified when, in early 1984, the Minister appointed new commissioners, including Sister Denise Desmarchelier, a Loreto nun, and Professor R. Sackville, co-chairman of the Australian Co-ordinating Committee of Jewish Day Schools. Sackville, a distinguished lawyer, 'did not believe he had been appointed as a representative only of Jewish or non-government schools but rather for his independent judgment'.[45] This should, of course, be the attitude taken by all Commission members. They are appointed for their expertise in one or more of the various sectors of schooling, but - as members - they are no longer representatives of organisations; nor is it desirable that they should continue to hold executive office in them. This is not the view of the ATF: 'All Governments have taken a view that nominees to the Schools Commission are not representative...a Schools commissioner is burdened with a 19th century view of confidentiality of many, if not all, documents... This is of particular concern to the teacher unions because of our democratic traditions and requirements concerning consultation at all levels.'[46]

On 22 May, 1984, *The Canberra Times* reported that Senator Ryan was 'considering restructuring the Commission because it had become "too divisive" and the quality of its advice had fallen'. She criticised the presentation of three options for government school funding without a firm recommendation, and the call for continued funding to all private schools without provision of reasons. Van Davy commented: 'For the first time in public we have an indication that the Government...and the Government's bureaucracy, as well, are having difficulty in making sense out of the Commission's report'.[47]

The government school lobby

The ATF (and ACSSO) have shown more determination than the non-government school authorities in pressing their aims. According to a report in *The Sun*, Joan Kirner, while a member of the Schools Commission in 1978, was organising pickets to demonstrate against Level 1 non-government schools, 'because they were above government school resource averages'.[48] In early January, 1983, the ATF refused to provide a short list of names for selection of a new member until the Commission was restructured to ensure 'genuine independence'.[49] In April, 1983, the ATF 'decided to rejoin the commission'. Rebecca Batties of *The Age* quoted Davy as claiming that Senator Ryan would change the composition of the commission 'in such a way that satisfied us that it would stop disadvantaging government schools'. Davy stressed that more changes would have to be made.[50]

Davy is on record as saying, 'No public funds should go to private schools, whatsoever'.[51] In 1983, he said that the Schools Commission must, for 1985, put forward as one of its options 'withdrawal of funding to non-government schools'.[52] His appointment as a commissioner suggests that the Government accepted his views as a possible interpretation of the Schools Commission Act (1973).

A sub-head (4.12.4) of the Commission's February, 1984 'Options' Draft Report had the title: 'Withdrawal of funding to non-government schools', but admittedly as 'outside the framework of Government policy'. I wonder if this qualification was strictly correct. If the Government overnight decides there are no or minimal 'needs', how does one deny its authority? It has 'the power of the purse' in the 'numbers' game. The report offered no defence except to note 'contrary assumptions...advanced by other groups in the community'.

Davy 'accused church schools of misusing funds'. The Chairman of the Commission, Dr Tannock denied misuse.[53] In addition, the Commission was 'certainly satisfied that the financial accountability arrangements in 1984 enable the Commonwealth to be confident that its general recurrent funds are being directed to the purposes outlined' ('Options' 4.42). This is effected through biennial surveys and a comprehensive vetting process for schools which apply for capital grants.

On the other hand, the Commission called for 'a higher level of accountability' of the States for Commonwealth funds allocated to government schools (3.13). Particular mention was paid to monitoring 'the requirement that general recurrent financial assistance is applied by the State according to the respective needs of...schools'. Specific reference was made to the provision of data from 'individual government schools, either on a total or sample basis' (3.13.2). The Commission believed that 'the principle of public access to information on schools' operations is such an important one that serious consideration should be given to these kinds of initiative' (3.14).

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W. (Peter) Coleman, CPD, 30 May, 1984, p. 2520, has claimed: 'The real test of this bill will come when the new CDC gets to work.' See, also, 'Second Reading speech' incorporated in the Senate Hansard, 4 June, 1984, pp. 2271-2273. H. Beare, 'Canberra dominates curriculum centre', 18 September, 1984, maintains that the new CDC will lack the autonomy of the previous statutory body.

7. Ref 1, p. 115. See, also, CSC 1983 Annual Report, p. 10.

*Draft Report of the panel (G. Hancock, chairperson) reviewing the School's Commission Capital Grants Program* was under review during January, 1985. Key points were the recognition of the Commonwealth's responsibility for 'all Australian children' (5. 18); 'there is a growing backlog of school facilities requiring renovation' (5. 13); and concern as to how 'the provision of new schools/places in developing areas, as well as upgrading existing schools serving poor communities, could be met simultaneously and effectively' (5.14, 5. 34). The heavy load on the State Planning and Finance Committees was recognised, as their work spread from the Capital Grants Program to the General Recurrent Grants and Special Purpose Programs (5. 68-69). Interesting comment was that 'a recommendation for funding takes 14 months on average' (5. 101); and that State Education Departments involved with boarding and hostel facilities 'do not seem keen to increase their involvement because of high cost factors and the difficulty of recruiting suitable staff' (5. 45). A most significant fact, which accounts for 'vacant places in government schools', is that 'non-government schools are not usually able to commence building in the early stages of a growth area' (6. 24). There are solutions; see my p. 245. An enlightened and amusing comment is that 'the Commonwealth Minister for Education is often perceived as the de facto Minister for non-government schools in Australia, while some State Ministers are seen largely as Minister for government schools only' (6. 21); cf. my p. 5 and Chapter 27.

8. Cf. B.A. Santamaria. 'Abolish the Schools Commission?', News Weekly, 12 April, 1978.

9. McKinnon, K.R., ref 1, op. cit., pp. 111-112.

10. Hossack, I. The Canberra Times, 25 February, 1981.

11. Bennett, D., ref 5, op. cit., pp. 173-174.

12. Hogan, M. (1984), p. 98.

13. Bennett, D. ref 5, op. cit., p. 175.

14. McKinnon, K., ref 3, p. 142; see, also, ref 1, pp. 116-119, for an excellent summary of the meanings attached to 'equality'.

15. Note the comment of J.P. Keeves, 'The research contribution to educational practice' in Shellard (ed). He states that the Disadvantaged Schools Program arose from recognition of the relationship between student performance and homes of lower occupational status. See, also, address by Senator Ryan to the Disadvantaged Schools Program Review conference, 2 June, 1984.

16. McKinnon, K. and G. Hancock, 1976. Financing schools in Australia...' Canberra, p. 33.

17. See K.G. Mortensen, Appendix C ('Occupational status and educational attainment') in his Education and Family Socio-Economics. These results were achieved in schools of low resource. ACSSO/VICCSO are currently demanding (School Bell, vol 38) that resources should be increased to obtain equality of outcome, e.g., 'ACSSO believes that it is the responsibility of schools and the schools system to ensure equality of outcome for all students' (no. 3); 'VICCSO's policy is strongly opposed to any funding of non-government schools while there are unmet needs in government schools' (no. 4); funds 'ought to be directed towards redressing inequalities in the outcomes from schooling, which is a clear government policy priority' (no. 5). School Bell (no. 3) quoted correspondence from Senator Ryan in which she stated that Victoria was receiving, in 1984, $8,778,000 for disadvantaged schools and $82,237,000 as general recurrent grants for all schools. She added: 'The Victorian Minister of Education had responsibility for detailed administration of these funds... Differential needs of individual schools should therefore be pursued with him.'

18. Neal, L.F. 'Poverty and Education in Australia', ACES Review, 4, no. 1, Feb/March, 1977.

19. Criticism of the educational philosophy of the Interim Committee has not been confined to NSW academics associated with ACES. D. White, 'Create your own compliance: the Karmel prospect' (Arena, vol 32-33, 1973, pp. 35-48) claims that the Interim Report rejected intellectual formation of the student as the prime function of the school, that its main goal was to socialise the young and to provide diversity of opportunity to 'enable a hundred flowers to bloom rather than to wither' (2.10). White saw the change, initiated by those in authority, as gradual. Gerry Tickell,

a former president of the ATF, is aware of the anomalies: 'We know that within our public education system middle class kids are much better served than kids from working class areas.' He pointed to selective schools for the 'gifted', to fees in government schools, and to subsidies dependent on the capacity of a community to raise matching moneys; see Helen Trinca, 'Teachers warned on "blind defence" of State schools', The Australian, 6 January, 1983.

20. Maslen, G. 'A system that can destroy', The Age, 15 Feb., 1983.

21. Sheridan, G. 'Education in chaos - your kids are losing', The Bulletin, 8 February, 1983.

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23. For an analysis of 'Equality and Education', see, also, Crittenden (1981), Chapter 10.

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27. Ref 13, ibid.

28. The Age. 'Base school funds on need: ALP draft', 14 June, 1982.

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33. Free, R. Fourth National NCIS conference, May, 1983. See APC Review, IX, no. 2, 1983.

34. Ibid. Senator Ryan's address to the 46th meeting of the Australian Education Council, 6 May, 1983, uses exactly the same sentence referring to 'unfettered right'.

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36. Green, Sue. 'State school groups may leave Commission', The Age, 12 April, 1983.

37. McKinnon, K., ref 3, pp. 143, 149. However, McKinnon shows something of his bitterness and dissatisfaction in a later essay, where he refers to the Commission being 'blamed or embraced by the Fraser government according to political advantage', and to the circumstances of his 'final ticket of leave', ref 1, p. 132, 115.

38. Trinca, Helen., The Australian, 24 April, 1984.

39. Carrick, J. CPD, 20 October, 1983, pp. 1853-1854.

40. Carrick, J. CPD, 9 November, 1983, pp. 2426-2427.

41. McKinnon, K. 'Perspectives on educational policy', ANZAAS. January, 1974 (sic), mimeo, pp. 7-8. See, also, The Canberra Times, 23 January, 1975, for a condensation.

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Barbara Fih, 'Fewer free services to help the system', The Age, 25 February, 1984) reported a statement of Dr Tannock that there had been reductions in 'contributed services' and higher salary costs in Catholic schools. There had been an increase, in real terms, in both tuition fees and private income during the period 1976-81.

INTRODUCTION

This chapter considers the two chairmen who have been appointed to direct the activity of the Commonwealth Schools Commission: Dr K.R. McKinnon (1973-1980) and Dr P.D. Tannock (1981-1984).

Although the multi-member Commission bears responsibility through its signed reports, the Chairperson (whoever he/she may be) runs things on a day-to-day basis, controls the agenda, the research, and flow of material. The two Chairmen have exerted considerable influence over the direction of recommendations from the Commission. They were independent of the Commonwealth Department of Education, but were responsible to and had close contacts with the Minister.

I focus, first, on Dr McKinnon as he assumed office in late 1973, and then delivered three major papers which make interesting reading at the close of his six years as chairman. The consideration of Dr Tannock's thinking is centred on his *Options for Commonwealth funding of General Recurrent Resources for Australian schools* (February, 1984) and *Funding Policies for Australian Schools* (April, 1984).

DR K.R. McKINNON

BACKGROUND

Dr K.R. McKinnon began his career in a one-person primary school in Oodnadatta, South Australia, on the famous Ghan railway line, and then spent 20 years in Papua and New Guinea, where he fashioned the education system for the territory. He is currently vice-chancellor of the University of Wollongong, and chairman of both the State Board of Education, Victoria, and the Australian National Commission for UNESCO. In the latter capacity he is responsible for advising the Federal Government on the international program activities of UNESCO and for co-ordinating Australian participation in its Asian and Pacific regional activities.

McKinnon has been an imaginative and exacting critic of Australian education. He has indicated that 'prudence (even humility) suggests that advisors should more reflect than anticipate social change'. This statement involves danger, when various current social changes are a cause of concern, and 'social engineers' seek to cure society's ills by all sorts of regulation and innovation. McKinnon considers that 'anything you do in a school is social engineering. Those who want the schools to stay as they are are carrying out social engineering which gives advantages to some groups and leaves others behind.' He does not wish to join in 'a struggle between traditionalists and progressives', and regards the main task of the school as 'the intellectual development of young people'. He has written with understanding of the expectations of the poor, and with sensitivity on the need of modern pupils for emotional support and of school-leavers for a place in life.

He recognised the class issue as a central point of the debate, which is as much about envy and jealousy as it is about justice. Strangely enough, the deadly sins are more commonly found in the upwardly mobile than those still of humble occupation. In an address to the Australian Parents' Council during 1974, McKinnon stated that 'class and inherited privilege are more basic issues than religion in the Australian parliament...' His statement needs qualification. To say that a Government is not against 'religion' is not to say that its ambition to control will not have the same effect as hostility. The history of the Mater Hospital in Sydney is relevant. As Dr T. O'Connor, consultant surgeon, said: 'They (the Health Department) would never admit to being against religious hospitals, but the result of their policy is leading to the demise of religious hospitals. I don't say it is a vindictive anti-religion persecution, but it is the result of wanting to have total control of the system.' [1]

McKinnon realised the vagaries of categories - later known as levels, then groups, and now categories again - but as chairman of the Commission did little to clarify them. [2]

Labor Party policies have been that general recurrent grants were for 'needy' schools only in the non-government sector, but for all schools in the government sector with distribution at the discretion of the States. The Commission's *Report for 1981* lists government school general recurrent grants from the Commonwealth for 1980 as $208 m., large compared with allocations for migrant education ($24 m.) and disadvantaged schools ($20 m.). McKinnon knew that the Disadvantaged Schools Program provided 'a relatively small amount of additional resources, approximately 3 per cent of annual per student expenditure, to about 10 per cent of all schools declared to be disadvantaged'. [3]

He has treated the subject of 'choice' with ambiguity, due to inability or unwillingness to face the problem of the high income earner whose children receive free education in an elite government school. In addition, he stated in 1975: 'Some people claim that the education of children is the right of parents, and they want grants to be given to parents to spend as they think best, even if that means neglect of schooling. I think that is a denial of the rights of children. Governments have taken on the responsibility to provide education for children, whether or not their parents are interested. Children have rights to adequate education, and parents have other rights.' [4] This appears to be a confused statement, declaring that Governments will decide the usage of the taxation dollar as they, not parents, think best. The principle applies to all parents, not just those of proven or criminal inadequacy. Yet, Dr McKinnon went on to admit: 'Nobody knows the best way to go about producing the equality we're talking about.' Almost ten years later, educational theorists can make no better claim!

McKinnon realises that funding is only one factor in education. As he said in an address 'Pity the Poor Kids' (1982): 'If every young person had access to a variety of marvellously stimulating and resourceful tutors, who knows what the total effect might be on the nation... It is also highly desirable to involve parents and people from the community.' [5]

## THE COMMENTARIES OF 1974

McKinnon's philosophy is evident in papers - 'The next steps from Karmel' presented on 10 April, 1974 at Monash University as one of a series of lectures ; 'Some Problems of Finance in Education' which he gave to the Australian Parents Council on 24 August,1974; 'Perspectives on Educational Policy' delivered at the ANZAAS Congress, January, 1975. They are still, even more, relevant today - when all of us are older, when some can say, like small boys or girls at play, 'I told you so', and when some of the other little girls and boys may even be wiser.

### *One view of 'Choice' - to the APC*

* I like the choice made possible by the presence of both government and non-government systems and I want to see choice within government systems (the removal of zoning) and even within a single school (multiple programs)... As people interested in non-government schools you would no doubt say that 'prior right of choice' without adequate financial grants from governments is a hollow choice under present day conditions, but basically absence of legal restraint meets the minimum conditions of right. (We turn to the) stubborn problem of determining what is fair in allocating finance to facilitate practical opportunities for enhanced choice... we are concerned with the financing which makes choice available for the poor as well as for the rich, for the rural as well as for the urban child... I find that many who write to us apparently have no qualms about increasing dependence upon governments. Is there no threat to the essential independence/catholicity of your schools..?

### *Another view of 'Choice' - to ANZAAS*

* It is meaningless to talk of rights or choice in the absence of opportunities... Behind the two popular catch cries 'community involvement' and 'devolution of responsibility' there lies further fundamental questioning of the organisation of education... Put bluntly it is a question of the rights individual citizens have to be involved in decisions concerning the education of their children. It is the perennial question of the individual and the State. If there were no history, no vested interests, one could theoretically arrive at solutions which adequately weigh the right of individuals to determine their children's future and the right of the State to make decisions of most benefit to all... The existence of traditional administrative patterns, state wide teaching services, and long standing expectations of central government responsibility, load the dice against open consideration of such issues...

### *On 'Categories' - to the APC (1) and at Monash (2)*

* 1. If you did not question the basic premise of differential aid to schools but did find fault with the precise measurement of resources, I would not be uncomfortable - as long as you are prepared to put up suggestions for a better approach... The Commission is not committed to the category system... I am quite willing to admit that the category system could have regressive effects, in that schools might be tempted to try to maximise their assistance by minimising the resources which can be counted in the formula for categorisation.

* 2. The Commission is committed to the needs principle but not necessarily to continue the category system. It is committed to avoidance of distinctions between particular groups in the community on other than socio-economic criteria and it is enjoined by its Act to make it possible for the continued existence of both government and non-government schools in such a way to give parents a choice... Categorisation reflected more the demands the schools had made on the parents rather than the real capacity of the parents to pay... Two schools side by side, drawing from roughly the same clientele in terms of economic resources, might have been charging quite different fees and when assessed into different categories, attracted different grants.

*On ' States' use of grants for "needs" ' - at Monash*

* It is not even necessary for a State to guarantee that the money, especially the large amounts ($340 m.) in the two under-pinning general recurrent and general building programs, will be spent on the basis of relative need... Recurrent funds for the disadvantaged program are to be paid to the State without a formal pre-condition as to priority and need... Within the Catholic systems a Board...at least ensures that funds will be disbursed on an needs basis. There is no such device to ensure State systems use the fund for the most needy schools.

*On 'Child Rights' - to the APC (1) and at Monash (2)*

* 1. The Commission is essentially a funds distributing body, concerned with the needs of children and concerned, if necessary, to protect children against their parents - in the special sense that it is our job to see that they get adequate educational facilities even if their parents are not prepared to contribute proportionately equally.

* 2. The sins of the parents should not be visited upon the children; if children suffer from lack of parental interest the Government has a responsibility to correct the situation.

*On 'Expectations' and 'Emotional support' - to ANZAAS*

* Action may involve restructuring of both schools and their programs. It certainly would encompass introduction of teaching of ethnic languages and culture and even separate schools for a time for aborigines if that is what they need to establish identity and confidence. But it certainly also means schools must not lock children in romantic cultural ghettos - they need the same competencies as other Australians... There is no evidence supporting the notion that groups currently getting the least from schooling do not desire success in terms of traditional advantage qualifications and prestige occupations.

* Should there be some modern counterpart for the emotional sustenance of the extended family, some counter to the emotional isolation of small family units? If so, we ought to more seriously examine the question of school size and organisation. If schools need to provide supplementary assistance to the family in helping children appraise and develop their own full potential as human beings, then it will be necessary to take into account more factors than establishment of economic units for intellectual training.

## POLICIES AS CHAIRMAN

In addition to looking at Dr McKinnon's 'philosophy' as expounded to public audiences, we should also look at the direction of Schools Commission proposals and recommendations under his aegis.

His overall educational aims as chairman are summed up in two sentences: 'The Commission was constantly groping for ways to foster better human relationships in education and of matching more adequately the objectives of schools and the life of the community... The Commission's attitude to relationships, devolution and structures was predicated on the need for schools to provide positively helpful experiences for all students.' [6]

Under McKinnon the thrust of the Commission's recommendations on funding was towards: greater emphasis on government schools; increased control over non-government schools; the introduction of 'supported' non-government schools; schemes which did not depend on a nexus with government school costs, denied entitlement to a 'basic grant', and extended 'income testing' in assessing claims to all grants.

It will be evident that these aims show a close parallel with Labor policies. They give good reason for the standing that Dr McKinnon has in Labor circles and among those devoted to the government school cause. They also illustrate why the Coalition's policies vis-a-vis the non-government sector were clearly expressed in Guidelines (1976-82), which required increases in basic grants (to 20 per cent) and to the needs component (10 or 20 per cent), based on the nexus; and 'new places' through additional capital grants, e.g., $25 m. over the three-year period 1981 to 1983. Recurrent funding of government schools was determined according to their attainment of Karmel 'targets'.

## REPORT FOR THE TRIENNIUM 1982-84

*Report for the Triennium 1982-84*, submitted on 8 January, 1981, was the last handed down by Dr McKinnon, whose position as chairman was terminated in December, 1980. As with his other reports, it offered a comprehensive picture (in 483 pages), covering a range of topics that he saw as educational challenges in the 1980s. Chapter 14 considers the financial implications of the report, particularly what has become known as non-government school 'Income Testing'. Having considered McKinnon's general commentary on education as he entered the Schools Commission, it is relevant to examine his policies as he left it.

Recognising the multicultural character of Australian society, the Commission recommended courses fostering respect for the cultures of 'new' Australians and our own aborigines and enabling 'language maintenance' for children of ethnic origin.

The report - following the publication of *Girls, Schools and Society* (Susan Ryan was a member of 'the working party') in 1975 - examined the education of girls and analysed the problems of students affected by low income, isolation and distance, and handicap.

The Commission sought to devise means by which local communities would become actively involved in their schools. *Schooling for 15 and 16 year-olds* had already presented the argument, in 1980, that schools were too preoccupied with academic disciplines and intellectual development and that they were neglecting support for youth in the transition to adult life and work. Compulsory schooling was 'at present at a crossroads'. The Commission called for a 'youth policy', starting from the problems and interests of adolescents and involving the collaboration of other institutions in society. However, its main emphasis was still on the place of the school, which was to provide all the necessary programs for what is 'useful in practical affairs'. Yet, educationalists are now critical of 'vocational' education in technical schools even though it may provide both sound training and formal theory! [7]

Section 5.2 of the report stated : 'The Commission's paramount stance concerns a general orientation of schooling. It regards the curriculum and organisation of schooling - especially in secondary schools - as largely irrelevant to the lives of many students... This implies that schools must be oriented to society as it is unfolding, that the knowledge taught in schools must be related to life, that practical living skills (including resourcefulness, co-operativeness and positive attitudes) are as important as literacy and numeracy, and that every student should be valued and have the experience of succeeding. Schools must change with the times. Some are responding: others have a long way to go.'

What is important to recognise is that these wise words of 1981 were being achieved in low, very low, resource Catholic schools in the early 1960s through a quality formation in the basic disciplines (mathematics, particularly, and science) and entrance in science talent quests. 'The religion period' offered a period free of competitive pressures and provided an opportunity for a liberal and 'socially-critical' treatment of marriage, 'the third world', industrial society, nuclear power, etc. The Cadet Unit I knew was voluntary; forests and weather often generated conditions in which survival and a civilised life demanded intelligence, skill in management, support and cheerfulness from young leaders. Most were equal to the demands. The setting gave all opportunities for mastering either mapping and survey, radio and line communications, field engineering, or medical theory and practice. In addition, as few adults to this day seem to realise, boys (and, later, girls) saw at first hand the integration of these activities in a Unit in a large organisation (Army). They began to understand the need for command structures, roles, logistics, safety precautions, common sense, initiative, obedience, and sacrifice. It was a world in which any hard worker was encouraged in his studies, even though success was not immediate; the 'lame and the halt' were admitted into the Cadet Unit as long as there was not a risk to themselves or others. *

* See p. 138.

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See K.G.Mortensen, 'Catholic Education and the Community', paper given at Catholic Education Conference, Melbourne, August, 1965 and printed in Our Studies, May, 1966; 'Religion Period and the Matriculation Class' in Our Apostolate, October, 1965; and 'An Australian Army Cadet Unit 1945-77' (1978).

'Towards the Socially-Critical School' (by S. Kemmis, P. Cole and D. Suggett, VISE, 1983) is an interesting contribution, written from a secular humanist perspective. It fails to realise that intellectual, moral and emotional formation (not indoctrination), which is the function of schools, involves a combination - mastery of disciplines, liberal studies, and the development of a mind which is sceptical about modern writers whose theorising has not always been noted for its success. Cf. a similar interpretation advanced by Professor P. Musgrave of Monash University in VISE 'Viewpoints', no. 1, April, 1984. He considers that 'the very nature of our contemporary society demands us to be curricular Trinitarians and not Unitarians'.

Some are learning. For example, Germaine Greer now realises that 'sexual conditioning of women is a moving away from sensitising them to the embraces of their babies towards becoming more responsive partners for men'. In a review (The Catholic Leader, 1 July, 1984) of her 'Sex and Destiny', Kieron Moore, an English critic, states that the 'metamophosis which she has been experiencing in her own personal life has not yet run its course' and that her book should be 'obligatory reading in Catholic seminaries'. No wonder Greer has been accused of 'crypt-Catholicism'! (The Age, 14 & 11, February, 1984).

In a series of speeches during 1983, Susan Ryan claimed that 'education cannot be politically or socially [or morally] [or philosophically] neutral...it is not apolitical' (Commonwealth Record, 8-14 August, p. 1195; to the Federation of Australian University Staff Associations, Brisbane, 30 August; to a University of NSW Symposium, 10 November; to the 46th Meeting of the AEC, 6 May). Fair enough, and a candid admission that all teachers in all schools inculcate values - good or bad. However, I doubt whether Kemmis's hypothetical socially-critical teacher will 'remember - we are an educational institution, not a social action agency' (cf. M. Barnard, 'Your tax dollars at work', The Age, 13 December, 1983). Resource material in use is uneven, often biased, inaccurate, restricted towards a favored viewpoint, and unsuitable because it presumes a technical expertise or depth of knowledge - even as to the nature of Man and Woman - not available.

My main worry is that young minds will be indoctrinated politically and socially by 'the seekers after justice' who are so concerned about 'indoctrination in church schools'. 'Why do you observe the splinter in your brother's eye and never notice the plank in your own' (Mt 7:3; Lk 6:41). Eugene Kamenka, professor of History of Ideas in the ANU, came to Australia with his parents, Russian Jews living in Nazi Germany, 'quite literally, to escape death'. He notes, in a perceptive article, that 'those who enjoy wielding the big stick against the oppressor or the collaborator or the morally imperfect often have other passions than that of seeing justice done'. ('Discrimination not so serious as to justify legislation threatening freedom of speech', The Canberra Times, 16 August, 1984.

McKinnon considers that social, economic and technological circumstances are changing in an Australia which presented a broader cultural picture, but, in which, 'generally the poor stay poor... It is certain, however, that a real impediment to effective access to education is poverty'. Two comments may be made. First, the 'impediment' is not generally due to lack of staffing resources in State schools. Secondly, as Crittenden has pointed out, 'teachers have a restricted, expert task to perform and should not try (or presume) to take responsibility for every facet of adolescent development... The school (is) only one of many collaborators in the whole process'.[8]

## CHAIRMAN OF THE VICTORIAN STATE BOARD

Mr Fordham, Minister of Education, Victoria, described the appointment of Dr McKinnon as Chairman of the State Board of Education as 'exciting'; for Joan Kirner, 'it was a real coup'.[9] In an address to VICCSO, McKinnon indicated the main tasks ahead: 'Some of the key questions before us, of course, are simply the old questions in a new guise. The most significant is the notion of equality of opportunity... There are at least four other questions very much to the forefront: democracy in schooling, attitudes to students success, participation of students in the education system, and thinking about the curriculum.' [10]

McKinnon is concerned that 'schooling is governed by the factory mentality of the late 19th century' and that schools are still tightly structured into years, classes, streams, and subjects. His *Draft of Guidelines to be included in a proposed Ministerial Paper on Curriculum* (February, 1984) calls for 'flexible methods of teaching and organisation' to cater for student differences, so that both the gifted and the disadvantaged may be given appropriate opportunity. McKinnon seeks a curriculum which will 'challenge all students to develop the full range of their talents and learning potential'. He does not wish to trivialise curriculum so that it is 'based on low expectations which deny students real challenges and real prospects beyond school'.

'Draft of Guidelines' is at a level of generality that provides no guide to the attainment of academic goals and achievements. There is constant reference to 'agreed tasks and agreed goals' with overtones that suggest that these are not professional assessments of minimum competence, but conventions 'ensuring effective access and success for all students'. As a teacher, I always supported the provision of opportunity for young people of character, who were slow learners, with a will that did not match immediate prospects. However, 'Draft of Guidelines' provides no picture of this or any other factor relating to the real world of objective scholastic performance, life and work, and the competition which all face when they seek a job.

McKinnon underestimates the efforts made by teachers in many schools (not always of high resource) to achieve these aims through encouragement/help in studies and through 'extra-curricular' activities. In addition, as Maslen notes, 'where the document does perhaps fall down is its failure to provide examples of desirable or possible organisational models'. [11]

Barry Manefield, a former president of the NSW Teachers' Federation, has said: 'The story of curriculum development over the last 15 years is a disaster. School-based curriculum development is an educational catastrophe...' [12] In the 1950s, there was glib talk about 'integration' of subjects but, when teaching photosynthesis to Year 10, the writer was fully aware that he had to provide a sound foundation in botany, chemistry, and aspects of physics dealing with light and energy. In 1979, the late James McAuley made a similar point about a 'favourite topic', pollution: 'But pollution is not a subject. The subject or disciplines required for an intellectually responsible approach to the problem of pollution are various, e.g., biology, chemistry, economics, statistics, geography and history. It is by training in some of these that one might begin to understand and make a contribution to discussion. The business of the school is to train students in real subjects , so that they can begin to handle problems.' [13]

## P.D.TANNOCK (1981-84)

### THE NEW CHAIRMAN

When the Federal Government announced the termination of Dr McKinnon's chairmanship of the Schools Commission, there was a storm of protest at the replacement of 'a leading educator who can think through issues' (Joan Kirner).[14] His successor, Dr P.D.Tannock was described by *The Age* as 'an educational conservative although he has an impressive academic record...a friend of Mr Kim Beazley...a Roman Catholic'. Gerry Tickell commented on the 'provocative decision to appoint a partisan chairman'. [15] According to Sue Green, Tannock was 'closely identified with the private schools lobby'.[16] Maslen stated that he possessed 'traditional views on the role of women'. [17]

Tannock played an important role in the setting up of the Western Australian Catholic Education Board, but his appointment as chairman of the Schools Commission originated in the quality of his work as a member since 1973. His career began as a teacher and senior master in government schools in W.A. After a period as a resident fellow of John Hopkins University, U.S.A., he was appointed to the University of Western Australia, where he later became Professor of Education. He has been associated with the ANU (1973) and the University of London (1976), with consultancies to the Ford Foundation in New York and OECD in Paris. Dr Tannock is an expert on constitutional matters and is generally regarded as having had a major hand in the preparation of the Schools Commission 1978 discussion paper: *Some aspects of School Finance in Australia.*

Tannock has presented concise annual 'Recommendations' and 'Program Guidelines', in addition to yearly reports. He has not provided a 'Report for the Triennium', the one due in March, 1984 being delayed at the request of the Minister, Senator Ryan. His *Funding Policies for Australian Schools*, described in Chapter 23, is a skilful work of compromise/consensus which provided some benefits for both the government and non-government schools. It is the work of a financial technician rather than an innovator, and it is significant that Tannock has noted: 'You have to work within existing structures. The Karmel Committee...set in place the structure we have now.' [18]

Dr Tannock's concern for the future of his wife and five children, and his desire to return to Perth, have long been recognised, and his resignation as chairman - to date from 1 January, 1985 - was not unexpected. The announcement in July, 1984, prior to the release of Senator Ryan's *Guidelines 1985-88* (14 August, 1984), was obviously timed to avoid any suggestion that his decision was influenced by Government policies or reaction to the recommendations of the Commission's April 'Funding Policies'. Mr Wal Fife said that Dr Tannock had been 'highly valued by the Coalition Parties' and expressed fears that his retirement would open the way to 'a restructuring of the Schools Commission'. [19]

## EDUCATIONAL GOALS

The judgments of the 'conservative' Tannock and the 'progressive' McKinnon did not, in fact, differ on fundamental issues.

Tannock believed that 'far too many young people leave school prematurely without the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values, confidence or maturity to meet the challenges of life; that 'for many who complete their secondary education, the curriculum to which they have been exposed and the qualifications they have gained are often irrelevant and meaningless'. [20] He wished that children obtain a better mastery of core subject matter at primary level; that technical colleges should play a supportive role in teaching core, as well as vocational, subjects to ill-equipped leavers at Year 10; and that a school's vocational assessments should play an important part in determining tertiary acceptance. [21] Tannock's policies for 'the reform and development of secondary education' are set out in the Commission's *Recommendations for 1984*, pp. 2-3. He regarded their achievement as a 'long-term task, necessitating national leadership'.

## PARTICIPATION AND EQUITY

Senator Ryan has stated that 'the Government sees the "Participation and Equity" Program as of key importance in stimulating the changes needed in education to meet the aspirations and needs of our young people'. [22] She approved the response of the Schools Commission: *Participation and Equity in Australian Schools* (March, 1984) which proposed 'special emphasis on curriculum-based school improvement plans...development of the secondary curriculum cannot be successful without attention to its links with the worlds of work, further education, the wider social world, and the controversial issues of the day' (3.19-3.20).

There are two major problems. First, jobs/careers is the key issue for the young and, according to an opinion-poll, they are sceptical about PEP. 'The knee-jerk reaction, it says, is that such a scheme "would not achieve anything and would probably be a waste of money".' [23] Secondly, as Paul Gardner has pointed out, education is 'centrally concerned with ideas: philosophies, attitudes, ways of thinking. Unfortunately, ideas cannot easily be "delivered" in a bureaucratic fashion from a Federal Government to the grass roots.' [24] Gardner does not cite the nature of these ideas, which are certainly more than pedagogic practices. At the core is the need for a coherent philosophy, providing meaning, and an understanding of life, for Man, Woman, and Child.

A panel on TV Channel 0/28 - 'Issues 84' - on 18 June, 1984, had similar misgivings. Senator Ryan agreed that 'equity' might be idealistic, but that 'participation', in which kids related to the basic competencies they were taught, was practicable. Bob Morgan, speaking for aborigines, was not convinced that they would benefit unless they participated in details of planning - which was not now the case. Vasilo Nihas for the ethnic community asked why minority groups had not been consulted prior to implementation and 'Who trains the trainers?'. The most vigorous reservations came from a spokesman for the NSW Teachers' Federation. He wanted programs to be expressed im more concrete terms and to know what they were likely 'to do to kids'. He stressed the necessity for relating education closely to work, for a solid core curriculum, and for avoiding diversifications which produced 'Mickey Mouse courses'. He considered that increased participation in secondary schooling would not solve the key issues: access to tertiary education and entry into the work force. He pointed to the inadequacy ($6.6 m.) of NSW's PEP component. [25]

Some systems and schools that have shown initiatives under the transition from school to work program, introduced in 1979, have already made progress in attaining the ends of PEP. Some have concentrated on students 'at risk'; some have involved the whole school. The most successful have not introduced ad-hoc changes, but have developed clear strategies starting with the experience of past pupils; staff, parents and pupils have been consulted in the planning of alternative courses. It is essential that parents should see PEP as providing qualification for further study and that students should be confident that it will lead to job opportunities.

In September, 1984, 170 delegates from all States and Territories attended a PEP national conference in Canberra. Workshops covered such topics as support programs for migrants and aborigines, expanding opportunities for girls, and school-TAFE co-operation. Sessions relating to the 'refining' of PEP included teacher development, institutional change, system response and involvement in change, and action at the national level. [26] In an address to the conference, Mr Hawke stated that he doubted whether the present-day education system was adequate to the task of preparing young people for life in 'a hard, competitive world'. For this reason, the Government had initiated a number of reviews: into Labour Market Programs (the Kirby Committee); into the quality of education (the Karmel Committee); into TAFE's role in developing a skilled work force (through the CETC).

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2. McKinnon, K.R. 'Meeting needs: seven years' hard labour' in Palmer (ed), p. 111, where he admits that the equity of recurrent grants funding within the non-government sector 'has always been questionable'.

3. Ibid., p. 119.

4. See D. Dale, 'What progressive education aims to do for your child', The National Times, 22-27 September, 1975.

5. McKinnon, K. 'Pity the poor kids', Conference on curriculum at Latrobe University, VISE News, July/August, 1982.

6. Ref 2, op. cit., pp. 122-123.

7. Crittenden, B. 'Secondary education: reshaping the pattern', Current Affairs Bulletin, 60, no. 9, February, 1984; cf. David Dyer, 'Promoting higher standards in schooling', IPA (Institute of Public Affairs) Review - 38, no. 4, Summer, 1985, p. 198.

8. Crittenden, B., ibid., pp. 24, 26.

9. Fordham, R. 'Responsive school system demands parent involvement', School Bell, November, 1982; Joan Kirner talks with P. Carswell, 'Labor in power. It's time for the curriculum issues: we need to get down to actual school practices', The Victorian Teacher, April, 1983.

10. McKinnon, K. 'Making sense of the big questions in education today', School Bell, February, 1984.

11. Maslen, G. 'The high and low roads to skills for living', The Age, 10 April, 1984. Maslen is no more impressed with the Ministerial Paper: 'Curriculum Development and Planning in Victoria' issued as guidelines to State school councils; see The Age, 'Foreign language to be a must for all students', 22 September, 'Paper a bland and controversial mix', 25 September, 1984.

See L. Chipman, 'Failing Australia's children', Quadrant, Jan/Feb, 1984, pp. 36-43, for an alternative view of curriculum and compare the Theodore Fink Memorial Lecture, 'The school and the university: what went wrong in western education', given on 18 September, 1984, at Melbourne University by B.R. Clark, professor at the University of California. He stated: 'A large subset of students are kept in the comprehensive high school in undemanding programs and allowed to graduate without academic effort... The American system of unselective comprehensive secondary schools seeks to put equity first, social integration second, and excellence a distant third.' According to G. Maslen (The Age, 24 September, 1984), Mrs Jean Blackburn made a scathing response. She disputed the idea that a return to selective high schools with an emphasis on academic rigour was any solution.

12. Quoted by Leonie Kramer in 'Today's needs in education', Institute of Public Affairs, Review, Summer, 36, no. 4, 1982-83, p. 111.

13. The Catholic Weekly, 'Schools used for the wrong reason', 9 August, 1979.

14. Maslen, G. 'Head of Schools Commission loses his post', The Age, 4 December, 1980. See ref 2, p. 132, for McKinnon's description of his termination.

15. The Age. 'Storm erupts over new schools chief', 5 December, 1980.

16. Green, Sue. 'Report sparks warning on schools body', The Age, 29 August, 1981. Cf. S. Marginson, 'Surprise, surprise, Tannock lets us down', The Australian Teacher, May, 1984; he described Tannock as 'closely identified with private interests'.

17. Maslen, G. 'New man a conservative', The Age, 10 February, 1981. See, also, Maslen's 'Life has not been easy for the man at the top', The Age, 22 June, 1982.

18. Trinca, Helen. 'The ex-footballer with the toughest job in education', The Australian, 24 April, 1984.

19. Fife, W. Press Release, 25 July, 1984.

20. Tannock, P. 'Trends: a full education policy', Education News, 18, no. 5, July, 1983, pp. 46-47.

21. Robinson, Danielle. 'Schools chief calls for end to final exams', The Australian, 20 January, 1983.

22. CSC. 'Participation and Equity in Australian schools: the goal of full secondary education', March, 1984. Ministerial statement, p. x. See, also, CSC brocure, 'PEP is concerned about a fair go for all Australians', 1984.

23. Oakes, L. 'The conservative face of youth', The Age, 4 May, 1984.

24. Gardner, P. 'Lots of PEP talk, but little action', The Age, 3 April, 1984.

25. According to an editorial, 'A little more PEP', in Sydney's Daily Telegraph (8 May, 1984), it 'has'nt been earmarked yet... When $6.6 m. gathers dust for five months, waiting to reach the 15-19 year olds it's supposed to be helping, something is wrong'. On the other hand, Senator Baume regarded reports of delays as 'a very small criticism', CPD, 10 October, 1984.

26. See 'PEP: "better education for all kids" ', The Catholic Leader, 23 September, 1984. For part of the speech of Senator Ryan to the PEP national conference, see Education News, 18, no. 12, October, 1984.

# 13

# Carrick

## INTRODUCTION

When the Governor General, Sir John Kerr, removed the mandate of Mr Whitlam and the Labor Government in late 1975, the Liberal and National Parties swept the polls in the subsequent election. Mr Fraser became Prime Minister and held this office in a series of Coalition Governments until the victory of the Hawke-led Labor Party in 1983. Fraser selected Senator J.L. Carrick as his first Minister for Education. The latter has stated: 'I speak as one who was educated, and proudly so, in State schools - State primary and State high schools. I speak as one who has been very active in parents and citizens associations in State schools.'[1] As a former member of the AIF's 'Sparrow Force' in Timor, and prisoner of war (1942-45) of the Japanese in Java, Singapore and Thailand, Carrick was not unprepared for situations demanding pressure and hardship. His portfolio certainly presented difficulties. Dr McKinnon describes him as an 'able, persuasive, patient minister determined to implement Liberal party policies'. If one reads between the lines, these were not always congenial to the Commission's chairman.[2]

The economic difficulties of 1975 led the Labor Treasurer, Mr Hayden, to defer triennial planning and, while holding recurrent grants at real levels for 1976, to limit capital expenditure to essential projects.[3] According to Spaull, 'Senator Carrick found that he had to defend the interests of his portfolio from the Treasury; in doing so, at least in 1976, he impeded the dismantling of Labor's schools policies. Hence the story of education in 1976 appears to be one of valiant delaying action by the Senator to prevent substantial cutbacks in educational spending.'[4]

This chapter keeps closely to the topic of school funding, but it should be noted that, from the beginning of his ministry, Senator Carrick was concerned with the relation between schooling and work (see discussion of the Commission's 1977 report in Chapter 11), and post-secondary education in relation to labour market opportunities. Funding for Technical and Further Education (TAFE) was increased substantially.

The Liberal Party, particularly Mr Fraser, as Prime Minister, was concerned that educational standards were not being maintained and that this had an adverse effect on employment. In 1978 the Government announced its intention to conduct a National Inquiry into Teacher Education with Professor James Auchmuty, former vice-chancellor of the University of Newcastle, as its chairman. The Schools Commission produced 'A Discussion Paper': *Issues in Teacher Education* (September, 1979). In a rather amusing development the States had decided that they, too, should have inquiries and, if they could not afford one, at least a co-ordinating committee. The 'Victorian Enquiry', chaired by Mr Justice A. Asche, submitted the 553 page *Teacher Education in Victoria* in February, 1980; the 'Auchmuty' report was completed in September, 1980. Both came to much the same obvious conclusion, viz., there was need for continuing and in-service education of teachers.

## GUIDELINES: 20 May,1976; 3 June 1977

*See Rolling Triennium 1977-79, pp. 2-3; Report for 1978, pp. 27-8.*

The Guidelines issued on 20 May, 1976 indicated that the Commission should have 'due regard to maintenance of effort', but with consideration 'to those non-government schools which are unable to increase their fee income in line with rising costs [and to] the difficulties facing boarding schools'.

Both sets of Guidelines expected that 'the Commission will make provision for the continuation of special purpose programs such as those for handicapped children, for migrants, for disadvantaged schools (including those in country areas) and for children in institutions' (s. 5, 3 June, 1977). Section 6 suggested that savings should be effected through cuts in 'Services and Development' [a type of 'in-service' teacher training program] and 'Special Projects', popularly known as the 'innovations' program.

The Schools Commission Report: *Rolling Triennium 1977-79* noted that there was 'a marked gap between the resources available to government schools and most non-government schools (3.16)... In 1976 low resource non-government schools have almost certainly fallen further behind government schools... When in addition it is noted that in 1977 there can be no significant increase in the Commonwealth contribution and that government school resource levels are continuing to rise it is obvious that the gap between government and most non-government schools is likely to increase' (3.17).

To redress this, Senator Carrick's Guidelines of 3 June, 1977, called for a reduction of $9 m. in Commonwealth funding of government schools and an increase of $13 m. for non-government schools. Some $8 m. of this sum was needed to retain the linkage with government school recurrent costs. To enable Level 1 and 2 schools to eventually reach a funding level of 20 per cent of government school costs, $2 m. was allocated as 'a first step'. $3 m. additional capital was to be provided to assist non-government school building in expanding areas of population.

Carrick's arguments were sound, viz. a growing gap in resources between Level 6 non-government schools and government schools, a reasonable basic grant for all non-government school children, linkage of grants to per pupil expenditure in government schools, the right of parents in 'expanding areas' to some assistance in free choice.[5] However, the reaction was fierce, varying from criticism in the Commission's *Report for 1978* (pp. 3, 12) to the bitter opposition of groups identified with the interests of State schools. Forell made some good points: the fact that 'the great majority had no effective choice at all'; the sums involved were relatively 'trivial'; and the States were being given the same dilemma as non-government schools. 'Should they prune spending on their own schools in the hope of attracting more Federal aid as standards drop?' [6]

A news report stated that Syd Bourke, chief research officer of the Australian Council for Educational Research, had responded to Senator Carrick's comments on the ABC's radio program AM. Bourke reported the ACER's findings on the literacy and numeracy level of schools: 'students of independent schools are not disadvantaged'. [7] However, Senator Carrick was speaking of 'inputs'. [8] To carry the argument from 'outcomes' to its logical conclusion, if the results of a low resource non-government school were superior to those of an 'average' government school, this could be used as a ground for reduction of its support. [9]

## SCHOOLS COMMISSION: REPORT FOR THE TRIENNIUM 1979-81

The Commission's *Report for the Triennium 1979-81* showed (Table 3.4) that Victoria had reached resource targets by 1976. Catholic systemic schools were 'on average operating with 68 per cent of the resource levels of government school systems (6.8)'.

In spite of the difficulties confronting non-government schools / parents irrespective of resource, the report proposed the breaking of the nexus with government school expenditure and suggested a tri-partite agreement binding non-government schools / States / the Commonwealth in the sharing of operating costs. E.G. Dunne in a minority report referred to the Commission's target resource standards or 'standard costs' as 'a national Guesstimate of what is required for children in Australian schools'. As for 'maintenance of effort', he stated that it was 'quite anomalous to speak of honouring "obligations freely undertaken" (Report, 6.25)...when one of the three partners is forced through economic necessity to "drink at the trough" '.

## GUIDELINES: 9 JUNE,1978

*See Report for 1979, pp. 17-20*

The 1978 Guidelines, stipulating expenditures for 1979, drew attention to the fact that 'by the end of 1978 most States will have reached or passed the resource use targets established by the Karmel Committee... Account also was taken of the enhanced financial position of the States in terms of the new tax revenue sharing arrangements.' [10]

Because of these facts, the Guidelines reduced the State school allocation for general recurrent and capital programs by $8 m. and increased non-government school funding - by $9.1 m. for the automatic linking of recurrent grants to the average per pupil expenditure in government schools; by $2.4 m. to continue the movement of Levels 1-3 schools towards 20 per cent, and by $2.5 m. to enable a small supplementation for Level 6 schools.

*The Age*'s response to the Guidelines was to refer to Senator Carrick's 'distorted sense of priorities', but the Minister continued to stress the basic principles that guided him. [11] For example, he stated: 'Only four per cent of State education budgets is directed to non-government schools though these schools house 21 per cent of all students. This led the Commonwealth, through the Schools Commission, to allocate approximately 39 per cent of its funding to the non-government sector in a partial rectification of the gross imbalance...' [12]

## 'SOME ASPECTS OF SCHOOL FINANCE IN AUSTRALIA'

The Commission presented a discussion paper in October, 1978, as a contribution 'to the discussion of future approaches to the funding of schools, particularly those in the non-government sector' (*Preface*).

The paper is unique in that it makes positive statements implying the *right* or *entitlement* of non-government school children to funding:

1. There are two separate rationales operating in determining the levels of government subsidy, one having the purpose of ensuring adequate resource levels, the other entitling all students to a basic level of financial support, irrespective of the resource level of the school (1.2).

2. In the case of government schools, the Commonwealth has not defined a specific entitlement as yet but it has continued to provide recurrent funds to States at much the same total level as in previous years, regardless of their own allocations of recurrent resources for schools. State subsidies for non-government schools, in general, are based upon the same 'entitlement' principle, and usually provide an allocation which is a fixed percentage of State costs (3.6).

One should not infer that the idea of 'entitlement' represents the general thrust of Schools Commission thinking. The concept has been accepted by the Coalition, but more in practice than in developed argument; it has never been a part of Labor theory. [13]

In discussion on parents' 'choice' of school, the Commission tended to include disadvantages rather that advantages. For example: 'Choice is not an end in its own right (1.7)... There are also questions about the effect on public systems arising from making the choice to move out of them easier for parents (1.9)... As public subsidies rise, some maintain that schools should be free to charge compulsory fees to any degree they desire, including maintaining them at present levels, even though this this may have the effect of limiting access to such schools by lower-income parents (1.18)'.

1.18 raised the critical questions of 'Community Standard' and 'Access' - difficult issues which have been made more difficult because they have never been really thought through properly. In recent times, the Catholic Education Office of Victoria has made valiant efforts to formulate policies on access, and other Australian CEOs and individual non-systemic schools in the non-Catholic sector, are conscious of the problem and work towards a solution.

2.18 pointed to a fundamental fallacy in the Karmel Report: 'It was assumed that improvements towards the targets in both sectors would be met from Commonwealth funds. This assumption, in the case of government schools, has proved unfounded. Largely as a result of State financed improvements, most States have already reached their targets, and the remainder are expected to do so by 1979.'

The Discussion Paper offered a range of options (payments to schools /payments to individuals/a varied public system) 'for discussion with interested groups and individuals'.

## GUIDELINES: 5 JUNE, 1979

*See Report for 1980; pp. 31-4*

The Guidelines for allocations during 1980 called for a reduction of $44 m. in government school grants. The Minister envisaged the recurrent program being held at the 1979 level and the adjustment being made to the capital program. Capital grants for non-government schools were also reduced (from $32.2 m. to $26.1 m.) , but there was an overall increase of general recurrent funding by $14.2 m. - to maintain the linkage between recurrent grants and standard government school running costs, and to enable a percentage point increase in funding of Level 6 schools. Jan McKenzie, the president of the Victorian Federation of State School Parents' Clubs, reacted angrily: 'How much more are Government school parents supposed to take?', she said.[14]

Fr F. Martin, who was always sensitive to State school claims and needs, commented as follows: 'It should be recognised that the Schools Commission funds of $338 m. in 1980 for government schools will constitute only some 12 per cent of total expenditure in government schools and the significance of the cut should be reviewed in proportional terms - a cut of $42.6 m. in a total budget of some $3100 m. It must be recognised, too, that the cut of $42.6 m. may be made up for in State government budgets because of increased funds deriving from changed federal - state financial arrangements.'[15]

While Senator Carrick administered the portfolio, the Government gave equal consideration to percentage movements in the 'basic grant' for all children and in the 'needs' component. It is hard to find a basis for the statement of Scotton: 'The Fraser government is moving towards a position in which its function...and its (more direct) responsibility for private schools takes the form of uniform per student grants'.[16] By 1983, it had provided a basic grant of '20 per cent' for all non-government school pupils and a needs component of '20 per cent' for the great majority - in Group 3.

## SOME FORGOTTEN DATA

On 15 October, 1981, Mr Hayden asked the Hon Wal Fife (who had taken over Senator Carrick's portfolio in 1980): 'What was the expenditure per student (a) according to each source [Commonwealth and States] of funds and (b) in total...' Mr Fife replied on 18 November, 1981 (CPD, pp. 3180-3182). His Table 3 showed a total per government pupil expenditure (est 1980 prices) of $1352 in 1973-74, $1565 in 1974-75, and $1630 in 1975-76; the ratios of Commonwealth to total expenditure were 7.8, 16.4, and 14.0 per cent respectively. We may consider this to be the Whitlam Labor period, with 1974-75 indicating the full impact of Karmel funding, and 1975-76 showing the restrictions of the 'Hayden' budget. During the Fraser period, there was a steady rise to $1790 (est) in 1979-80, even though the Commonwealth contribution had fallen to 10.9 per cent. Mr Fife also released data for 1978-79 which showed that government schools in all States had passed 'Karmel targets'.[17]

The Labor Opposition did not question the data, which show that, for Australia as a whole, average recurrent expenditures in government schools were on the increase during the ministry of Senator Carrick. One could criticise the priorities set by the States in the use of 'scarce resources', and fiscal relations between the Commonwealth and States, which led to the changed distribution in funding. One cannot substantiate criticism of Senator Carrick, given the increase in resources of the government schools and two factors relevant to the non-government sector - the needs of low resource schools and for some recognition in equity to the large number of parents who made sacrifices to send their children to high resource schools.

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2. McKinnon, K.R. 'Meeting needs: seven years' hard labour' in Palmer (ed), p. 132.

3. The Australian. 'Budget Special: education growth will be frozen', 20 August, 1975.

4. Spaull, A. 'Education' in Patience and Head (eds), p. 134.

5. Carrick, J. 'Progress in education since 1976', Report by the Minister for Education, 21 November, 1978. See, also, his letter to The Australian, 5 July, 1979, and W. Fife, 'Financing Education in Australia', giving statistics 1972-80.

6. Forell, C. 'Taking from poor to give to rich', The Age, 30 June, 1977.

7. Buchanan, B. 'Private pupils best readers', The Sun, 30 June, 1977.

8. In this context, I quote from Vivienne Howe's review (The Aust Journal of Education, October, 1979, pp. 304-5) of 'Educating for Literacy and Numeracy in Australian Schools' (Keeves et al, ACER, 1978):

The writers do not make specific mention of the controversy which attended release of the survey findings, political misuse, for example. In July, 1977, Bourke, as head of the project team, felt obliged to release some of the findings reported in Volume III prematurely, following Senator Carrick's claim that non-government school students lagged in performance. This claim was used to justify the Federal Government's policy of allocating funds to non-government schools. The team's analysis found the opposite to be the case: performance by non-government school pupils was, in general superior.

Howe misrepresents and misunderstands Senator Carrick's 'claim', which concerned 'inputs' of low resource non-government schools, not 'outcomes'. Cf. J.L. Carrick, 'Why private schools need Canberra's aid', The Age, 7 July, 1977.

9. The argument derives support from Peter Sheehan; see P. Ormonde, 'Money doesn't make bright kids', The Herald, 15 January, 1979. Sheehan stated, correctly, that there is no correlation between resource inputs and the quality of education as judged by 'educational achievement tests'. However, he has used data from J.P. Keeves on Catholic/State schools, where Keeves pointed out that 'the effects of the community in which the school is located' raised many points which are 'unanswered' (P. J. Sheehan, 'The Renewal Program after the Karmel Report', pp. 163-180, and J.P. Keeves, 'The needs of education in Australian schools', pp. 46-53, in D'Cruz and Sheehan, eds; cf. Keeves, 'The research contribution to educational practice', pp. 44-68, in Shellard, ed).

10. In a paper given to the June, 1984, NCIS conference, Van Davy made a strange statement on 'targets': 'We have been told for many years...that the Karmel targets were attained in government schools... What was attained, was the actual expenditure of the funds that Karmel advocated; what was not achieved were the configuration of resources that these dollars were supposed to have bought.'

11. The Age. Editorial. 'Wrong priorities in school funds', 12 June, 1978.

12. The Catholic Weekly. 'Details of grants to schools are announced', 25 June, 1978.

13. Cf. P. Baume, CPD, 13 December, 1983, p. 3671: 'I believe that every report up to that one ('Recommendations for 1984') had always recommended a continuation of basic support for every child in non-government schools.' McKinnon's reports regarded it as a political concession.

14. Maslen, G. 'Carrick gets a caning', The Age, 7 June, 1979.

15. The Advocate. 'Guidelines "a mixed basket" - education leaders', 21 June, 1979. P. Kelly ('The coming battle over funds for private schools',The National Times, 8 July, 1978, pp. 10-12) has summarised the philosophy of Fr Martin, who had a distinguished career as a member of the Interim Committee and of the Schools Commission until 1980:

> Fr Martin believes that big spending transfers from State to private schools will only reopen old wounds, polarise politics and even place in jeopardy such funds for private schools because of the controversy it arouses. He is a strong supporter of the Schools Commission and its brand of consensus politics...

16. Scotton, R. B. 'The Fraser Government and social expenditures' in Scotton and Ferber (eds), p. 14.

17. Fife, W. Ref 5.

## INTRODUCTION

When, in 1980, Senator Carrick was given the Minerals and Energy portfolio, Mr Wal Fife took his place as Minister for Education. During May, 1982, Mr Fife was transferred to Aviation, and Senator P.E.Baume was given responsibility for Education.

Senator Carrick's successors continued his policy of assistance to non-government schools of all types and, therefore, all parents. However, a significant development was when Mr Fife accepted, and Senator Baume later confirmed, the Commission's recommendation for 'Income Testing' non-government schools. This new procedure, born in 1981, was the latest 'child' of Dr McKinnon, probably adopted with reluctance by the Coalition, and now the bully boy of the Labor Party. 'Income Testing' may be defined as the principle that schools should not only be assessed by expenditure determined by Schools Recurrent Resources Index (SRRI), but also 'by disposable income...available from private funds and contributed services'.

## GUIDELINES: 22 MAY, 1980

*See Report for 1981, pp. 25-7*

Mr Fife's first Guidelines set government school recurrent and capital funding - in real terms - at the same level as for 1980. The Commission decided that, it would give the States 'maximum flexibility to deploy grants in accordance with perceived educational needs'; for recurrent purposes, it would provide equal amounts per student rather than differentiation into primary and secondary (p. 5). The most significant benefit in the non-government sector was a further increase, by one percentage point, in the funding of Level 6 schools.

## MR FRASER'S ELECTION POLICIES, 1980

The Prime Minister, Mr Fraser, whether because of his past role as Minister for Education or his recognition of this Ministry as a sensitive portfolio, retained a strong interest in Education policies which extended to initiatives in Cabinet. In September, 1980, he announced his Education program for the forthcoming election.

The six levels (1-6) for non-government school recurrent funding were to be compressed into three groups (1-3). Group 3 schools, the old Level 6, were to get increased grants - by a movement of one percentage point to 36% for primary school children and to 35% for secondary pupils, each rising to 40% within the life of the new Parliament. Level 1 and Level 2 (secondary) students (now in Group 1) were to receive an increase so that they could achieve a basic grant of 20 per cent. A further election commitment was the inclusion of an additional $25 m. for capital grants to assist with the provision of new schools and new places in existing schools over the three years beginning with 1981.

## REPORT FOR THE TRIENNIUM 1982-84

Chapter 12 has already considered McKinnon's final report in respect to its general educational philosophy. This report, in common with that issued for the Triennium 1979-81, continued to analyse and promote the concept of 'standard resources', this time presented as a 'basket of services' (12.55). However, the Minister again opted for past practice, which had employed a nexus with government school operating costs - after allowance for inflation.

The Commission was more successful with its notion of 'disposable income' - 'Income Testing', as it is now known. It objected to a school using all its recurrent grant on operating expenses and debt servicing, and employing its 'private income' for recurrent and other purposes deemed for the good of the school. This practice can be defended, but the Commission took a hostile stand. It stated: 'If it (a school) chooses to allocate large proportions of its private income for purposes other than its operating expenses and debt servicing and thereby reduces its actual expenditure on recurrent resource allocations for students, it can receive additional Commonwealth grants on the basis of its "assessed need" for additional resources. Such a practice is not only patently unfair but it is also inappropriate in terms of Commonwealth grants achieving their objective of improving resource standards (12.30)'.

Schools Recurrent Resource Index (SRRI) was developed to play a 'needs' game within the non-government sector; some schools were interpreting it as a 'rights' game, and this was unacceptable to those who held the patent. The Commission recommended 'two complementary measures: one of actual expenditure and one of disposable income' of school communities. It decided to alter the rules of the game and stated: 'The experience which will be gained in using disposable income as a modifying factor in assessing expenditure levels will enable the Commission to revise SRRI to incorporate both sides of the ledger for future use'. What quantitative expression would eventually appear was presumably the responsibility of the technical experts. Nevertheless, the whole exercise reminded one of the history of scientific theories in which devices are incorporated into or extended in a model to prop up a hypothesis which is founded on basic assumptions of reality which are unsound or incomplete.

In a letter dated 27 April, 1981 to Mr Fife, the Australian Parents' Council rejected the following proposals of the report: the 'basket of services' concept, including the argument that non-government schools could run at 90% of its value; the breaking of the nexus between grants and government school costs; inclusion of 'disposable' income into the calculation of grants for children; the 'aggregation' rather than the 'averaging' of systemic schools, particularly as 'some of these schools would be at levels 9 and 10 if the classification system extended that far' (12.46); and the implied contractural nature of the funding plan with its 'three partners...each with limited liability' (4.41).

## GUIDELINES: 4 JUNE, 1981

*See Report for 1982, pp. 34-46*

The Guidelines for year 1982 maintained the level of the general recurrent program for government schools. However, the 'earmarking' of $27 m. from the total allocation, so as to assist students to make the transfer from school to work, was strongly opposed by all in the State school sector. In actual fact, the final amount - when capital grant transfers were included as a specific element for the provision of equipment and facilities for transition education - was $45.7 m.

In respect to the non-government sector, the initial classification into three groups was such that Group 3 included only schools of SRRI 30 or less. The previous cut-off point for Level 6 had been 42, so schools in the zone 31 to 42 were now in Group 2 ('31 -50'). Where non-systemic schools were reclassified to a lower subsidy level, they were permitted to 'adapt' their resources over a period of up to two years.

The Guidelines, accepting the central thesis on the use of 'disposable income' as a criterion of funding, stated: 'The Commission, through its State Planning and Finance Committees, is to give consideration to school income as well as expenditure in the assessment of subsidy levels. However, this assessment will continue to be based primarily on recurrent expenditure.' In a letter (June, 1981) to the chairman, AISNSW, Mr Fife stated: 'It is expected that the decision to consider income in the assessment of non-government schools will help ensure that decisions regarding the level of Commonwealth funding to be granted to schools will accurately reflect their overall financial situation.'

The force of this statement was softened by Mr Fife during debate in the House of Representatives: 'There will be a reduction in the Schools Commission's direct involvement in program administration and information collection'(4 June, 1981); 'I would point out that non-government schools are free to apply their income from private resources as they see fit' (27 August, 1981).[1] As will be seen in the 'Critique of Income Testing' below, the first promise has not been realised, and the second is of dubious value when 'private income' is utilised in determining non-government school recurrent funding.

### REPORT FOR 1982

The main point of interest in this report submitted to the Minister on 17 August, 1981 was the tendering of a 'Minority Statement' by Mrs Joan Brown and Mr Alan Marriage. First, they cited *Report for the Triennium 1982-84*, 11.3: 'The Commission has been unwilling to divert part of the General Recurrent Grants Program to finance other priorities, however important they may be. To do so would be to involve States in a disruptive upheaval of ongoing programs.' They pointed out that planning for the 'transition' to work program was 'unsupported by any State Education Department, Government or interest organisation'.

Secondly, Brown and Marriage considered the two clauses of the Act guiding the Commission: the Government's 'primary obligation' to government school systems (13.4a) and 'the prior right of parents to choose' (13.4b). 'When minimal or zero growth was imposed, along with a specific minimum financial commitment to funding non-government schools, the choice was between opposing objectives. Government policies...have resulted in growing community divisions.'[2]

They stated that the Report had recommended that 'the Federal Government maintain, and when feasible, increase its commitment to the recurrent funding of government schools'. They implied that this judgment was to be applicable, irrespective of the resource levels available in government systems. They claimed that 'the quality of service' was 'beginning to deteriorate', but supplied no detail.

The Report 'recognised the urgent need for increased capital funding for government schools to overcome its backlog and build urgently needed schools in growth areas'. However, where a school exists in the mind only, it is easy to respect 'the prior right of parents to choose'. In an age of surveys and techniques for evaluation, there is no problem in ascertaining the wishes of parents in a developing area before determining types of schools for the first phase of building; a later survey should determine priorities in expansion. If parents in sufficient numbers choose a non-government school of a certain character, then it shows little respect for 'co-ordination' or for democratic procedures to build a government school and present them with a fait accompli.

## EVALUATION OF MR FIFE'S MINISTRY

In April, 1982, when Mr Fife was transferred to 'Aviation', John Bremer, the education editor of *The Australian*, wrote of the Liberal performance in critical terms: 'There has been no indication during the past two years that anybody in Canberra has the slightest idea of what a national educational policy would look like.'[3] Bremer did not recognise that decision on educational structures and policies in government schools, particularly, is the responsibility of the States. The issues will be better understood after reading Chapters 25 and 26.

Some have implied that Mr Fife's policies did not represent the mind of the Party as a whole. For example, Grattan claimed that his 'policies', presumably including acceptance of 'Income Testing', suited 'the Right wing of the Liberal Party and all the NCP'.[4] However, Senator Kathy Martin, former chairperson of the Liberal Party's 'back bench' committee for education has said: 'Any of these committees depend on the minister you have... Senator Carrick and Mr Fife have been very forthcoming with the back bench committee.'[5]

## GUIDELINES: 21 June and 17 August, 1982

*See Report for 1983, pp. 37-43*

Senator Peter Baume had distinguished himself as an able Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, but had little time to develop his new Education portfolio. He only handed down one set of Guidelines prior to the

Coalition's defeat in the election of March, 1983. The Government accepted the Commission's recommendation to increase general recurrent grants for government schools by 2 per cent in real terms. The recurrent funding of Group 1, 2 and 3 schools was set at 20, 30 and 40 per cent respectively of 'standard costs'; this involved a movement of Group 3 from 38 to 40 per cent.

The level of funding for government school buildings was maintained. The Guidelines called for 'a joint review, with State and non-government school authorities, of the rationalisation of school building provision, taking into account the implications of changing enrolment patterns within and between the government and non-government schools and between schools and TAFE'. This is a major task, and failure to recognise the principle of parent concern, at the regional and local level, could have disastrous consequences for the freedom of parents to exercise choice in educating their children.

Additional grants were made available for severely handicapped children, newly arrived migrant and refugee students; the Government also agreed to extend access to special education programs to children of below school age.

A statement of Senator Baume ('Programs of the Commonwealth Schools Commission for 1983') noted that 'that, in real terms, more has been allocated for the total recurrent support of government schools by my Government last year, this year and next year than in the last year (1976) funded by the Labor Government, notwithstanding the decline in enrolments and the continued growth in State expenditure on government schools in that period. The Commonwealth's support of non-government schools is a separate issue based on equity.'

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR 1984

This document submitted to Senator Baume by Dr Tannock on 6 January, 1983, was the last prepared under the auspices of the Coalition as Government. While the Commission had previously drawn attention to such factors as the attainment of resource targets in the government sector and the 'gap' that existed between low resource non-government schools and the average government school, it did not publish data on the imbalance between State budget funding of government and non-government schools. Failure to supply this information encouraged conclusions based on incomplete evidence. As 'Recommendations' stated: 'A great deal of debate, some of which is misleading and based on selective use of information, is heard about the relative commitments of governments to public and private schooling (p. 3)...' While non-government schools receive an equitable share of capital allocations from the Commonwealth, they receive nothing from State Governments. Although 24 per cent of Australian children attend non-government schools, they receive only 6 per cent of State budget recurrent expenditure on schools (pp. 4-7).

Certain other statements in 'Recommendations' can be qualified, questioned or disputed:

* 'Even in States experiencing significant enrolment decline, new schools are required (1.2)'. The implication was that they were to be government schools. Why not give parents a choice without penalty? The Commission admitted that 'many non-government school authorities continue to place high priority on the provision of new schools and the extension of existing schools to meet very strong enrolment demands in newly developed suburbs and towns (2.12)'. It wished 'to see much greater consideration given by State and non-government school authorities to the achievement of more co-ordinated planning (2.8)'.

* 'The Commission considers that some emphasis on secondary education is warranted in its funding implications (1.6)'. Agreed, but it is worth noting that the statement is not consistent with previous Schools Commission policy, beginning with Karmel and applied - to non-government schools alone - in *Report for the Triennium 1976-78*: 'There are, however, areas where the Commission has challenged traditional patterns largely taken for granted by others. The most important of these is in the balance of allocation of resources between primary, junior secondary and senior secondary levels (2.19).'

* The Government's change of the lowest SRRI rating for maximum funding from 42 (Level 6) to 30 (Group 3) was allowed to pass. The change meant that some schools in Level 6 had two alternatives - to reduce their SRRI or suffer a reduction in government grants. The effect, of either change was that the school's recurrent resources per pupil could not exceed 90% of those in State schools.

* The Commission recommended that there should be a continuum of funding levels within Group 2, i.e., from SRRI 50 to SRRI 31. This avoided the anomaly of schools marginally outside a group. However, I agree with Maslen, possibly for different reasons, when he says that 'this is only minor tinkering with what is now recognised as an inequitable system of apportioning grants to private schools'.[6]

## CRITIQUE OF 'INCOME TESTING'

*Report for the Triennium 1982-84*, 12.30, conveyed the impression that some non-government schools had mis-used their funds from the government. Although the Minister stated in Parliament, and Dr Tannock in writing to the Australian Parents Council, that no school had spent its grant improperly, the innuendo gave strength to the notion that 'disposable income' should be assessed.

Early in 1983, a number of non-government schools received letters from the Commission indicating that the school had not satisfactorily met the 'Income Test' criteria. A smaller number of schools were subsequently subjected to exhaustive financial investigation. Apparently some were suffering from the delusion, reasonable but unacceptable to the authorities, that recurrent grants could be used as an entitlement for recurrent purposes and that 'private income' could go towards other expenditure, including anticipated heavy expenses. Accountability for the recurrent expenditure of recurrent grants did not mean quite what it said! Nevertheless, as the Commission pointed out in its report *Recommendations for 1983*, and confirmed in *Recommendations for 1984*, 2.10, 'it is very difficult for many schools seeking Commonwealth capital support to gain a priority for funding, despite the strength of their case in terms of both educational and financial need. The result is often frustration for all parties.' However, to solve the problem by saving for capital purposes, in an attempt to match the huge sums available in State budgets for building government schools, was deemed 'unfair'!

Income assessment asked questions which departed substantially from previous practice. For example, does the school charge adequate fees; has the school maintained its overall private effort; what is the capacity of the school community to make a 'one-off' donation to a building project; is debt servicing affecting recurrent resource standards detrimentally?

Schools are admittedly unique institutions, particularly when they do not form part of a government system. Nevertheless, they should not be expected to operate according to business practices, which do not properly relate income and expenditure, which discourage financial input into school operation and development, which make planned expansion impossible, which disadvantage boarding schools, new schools and developing schools, and which add dramatically to the workload of school administrators. Yet the Commission seeks 'the reductions of tensions in Australian education that are distracting many from considerations of far more important educational issues' (*Recommendations for 1984*, p. 9).

## REFERENCES

1. Quoted in a letter dated 5 August, 1983, from the Chairman, Queensland Catholic Education Commission, to 'All Diocesan Directors'.

2. Note, also, Anderson et al, vol 1, 2.24, who state: 'The Schools Commission was therefore required by its Act to pursue two objectives which turned out to be competing...'

3. Bremer, J. The Australian, 'Liberal policy gets lost in the fog' (12 April); 'Baume the trump card in reshuffled Cabinet deck' (31 May); 'Thinking in terms of definable reality' (7 June, 1982).

4. Grattan, Michelle. 'End-of-year report on the prefect and team', The Age, 4 December, 1981. Cf. The Age, 'All hail our glorious team', 17 December, 1982, where Mr Fife is described as 'very conservative...nice bloke'.

5. Mackinnon, Marsali. 'The committees that wield the real power', The Australian, 5 May, 1982.

6. Maslen, G. 'Overlords differ over disputes on purse stings', The Age, 22 February, 1983.

# 15 ALP Policies

The approach in this chapter is to take the official Party platform and/or policy and to state - verbatim - its main tenets which are then examined in a critique. Federal and State policies are compared where this is relevant and profitable.

This chapter should be read in conjunction with 17: 'The Advent of the Hawke Government' - to complete the Federal picture; and with 25: 'Victorian Governments and the world they faced' ; 26: 'The Victorian Government school in 1984'; and 27: 'Victorian Governments and the non-government sector' - to complete the State scene. Chapter 16: 'Policies of the Non-Labor Parties' provides a base for a detailed comparison of alternative policies.

All sections of the Labor Party have committed themselves to the welfare of the 'public system' as their prime object. However, the parliamentary wings in the Federal Parliament and in State legislatures currently accept the dual system and the obligation to help non-government schools with low resources, associated with socio-economic deprivation. Many of these schools lie in the Catholic sector, and class 'solidarity' has been more significant in determining judgments than the (sometimes uncongenial) religious persuasion. The bête noire of the Labor Party has been the high fee schools, which, it claims, divide Australia on class lines. Strangely enough, the Labor Party's philosophy is directed to the collective or, in the income area, the individual. Neither the party, nor its mainstay, the ACTU, are family-oriented, as is shown in the lukewarm responses to increases in child endowment; see Chapter 30. Until Years 11 and 12, aid for poor families with children at secondary school is marginal; see Chapter 29. No Victorian primary school child receives means-tested assistance from either the State or Commonwealth Governments. The Labor Party has rejected concepts of family funding of education based on 'the voucher' which it sees as a threat to existing structures and to the welfare of 'public' schooling.

## THE LABOR PARTY (FEDERAL)

The three documents considered herein were supplied by the ALP (Victorian Branch) in November, 1983. Where item number references only are supplied, they refer to *Labor's Education Program: a policy summary*; where preceded by S, the document is *Labor's policy for non-government schools: a supplementary statement*, prepared at the time of the March, 1983 election; where preceded by P, the document is the ALP's *Platform, Constitution and Rules* (1982).

### Attack on Liberal/National Party Coalition

*'Under the Fraser Government...State Governments have spent more on their schools. However, they cannot continue to improve their schools while the Commonwealth squeezes their funds and shirks its responsibility (1). Increasing the advantages of the most well-off at the expense of the less well-off has been the cruel result of the Fraser

government's policy (S, s.3).'

A Community Standard for recurrent resources

* 'The Schools Commission will establish a community standard for school resources based on the level of resources available in comparable government schools. Non-government schools which choose to operate within this standard will continue to receive subsidies at their current real level. Subsidies will not be provided at a level which would take the resources of these schools above the community standard (7). These high levels of recurrent resources are combined with excellent facilities and intangible but important benefits arising from family circumstances to provide advantages to children attending them not available to most Australian children (10.4). Non-government secondary schools charging tuition fees of approximately $3,000 per annum and above and primary schools charging above $1,800 per annum, will be faced with this choice (7).'

Standards and Costs

* 'The applicability of the average cost measure is questioned by both non-government and non-government school groups in relation to the determination of standards... Labor believes that the level of resources available in government schools is a question of fact and the question of a fair comparability as between government and non-government schools services is capable of objective assessment...each state has a different resource level...the Schools Commission may determine that it should vary from region to region. Since within states there are variations from school to school in the level of resources, a band of resources rather than a single standard should apply (S, s.5).'

Standards and 'subsidies'

* 'No school is excluded from Commonwealth support under Labor's policy... If a school wishes to operate in the future at resource levels which take it beyond the point where it would attract a Commonwealth subsidy that will be its choice. The Commonwealth's grant will not cease immediately (S, s.5). On the grounds of equality of opportunity, Labor does not believe that governments should be adding to the advantages of those who already have superior chances (10.4). In making its recommendations, the Schools Commission will have regard to the requirement that Commonwealth funds be available only to those non-government schools whose total private and public resources do not exceed the resources of comparable government schools (P, p.51).'

Needs

* 'Under the needs principle, Labor will recognise the primary obligation of governments to provide and maintain government school systems of the highest standard open to all children (10.2)...the 'needs' of non-government schools will be assessed on a more comprehensive basis taking into account the capacity of the community supporting the non-government school to contribute, the educational characteristics of the children and the range of responsibilities which the schools accepts (10.3, 12.8; S, s.5).'

'The program of resource improvement directed to closing the gap will require additional expenditure from both public and private sources. The additional public funds to be provided by a Labor government will be distributed according to 'need' so as to raise the resource levels in those non-government schools serving the most needy communities without the necessity for increasing their fees (12.7). The Schools Commission will be asked to conduct a thorough review of the basis of assessing need so that the disincentives and the anomalies evident in the current system can be removed (S, s.5).'

Demands for information

* 'Labor will seek the co-operation of government and non-government systems authorities in the publication of much fuller information about the policies being pursued by them in their disbursement of recurrent and capital funds. Labor will also ensure that systems and schools in receipt of Commonwealth funds pursue policies destined to combat bias and discrimination on the grounds of sex, race or ethnic background (10.5; P, p.51).'

Capital for new places

* 'Labor recognises the legitimate aspirations of non-government school authorities to provide new school places in developing areas for families who have traditionally sent their children to non-government schools. Labor believes that the public interest requires that the provision of these new school places be in accordance with the overall planning for educational facilities in the area. Labor will therefore require that there be adequate consultation... Where new non-government school places are to be provided in accordance with the educational planning for a developing area, Labor will advance the provision of capital funds to ensure that new non-government school places are provided when they are required by their prospective students rather than some years later as at present (7, 12.12, 13; S, s.6; P, p.51). Labor will establish a revolving fund to be used to provide concessional interest rate loans to non-government school authorities to enable them to purchase appropriate school sites and to bring forward the construction of schools (S, s.6)...in established areas... Labor will require studies to be completed which assess the need for the proposed new places in the light of existing educational provisions... (12.14)'.

### *Critique*

This monograph claims that parents/guardians using their disposable income to further the education of their children, either by fees for pupils in a non-government school or, for students at a government school, payment for outside tutorial assistance, should not be penalised in respect to a basic grant. To date, the parent in a non-government school has accepted 20% as reasonable, even if inequitable; the parent in a government school has the full basic cost paid. Any reduction seems inequitable as the Party admits that there is an unknown variation in the standard and cost of operation of government schools. (According to the

*VTU Journal* of 12 June, 1980, the Australian Teachers' Federation *National Survey of Conditions in Schools 1980* showed 'enormous variation amongst government schools with some schools receiving far fewer resources than others'.)

What is amazing is that, while the lack of such data has always been a ground for complaint by those defending the interests of the non-government sector, so little has been achieved. The inadequacy of data has been used to justify departure from the nexus with government school costs on the pretext that the concept of an 'average' has no meaning. Those who have claimed that a non-government school should be compared with a counterpart in the government sector have been vindicated. Many schools were penalised in 1973, and subsequently, because this was not done.

The demands for more information placed on schools in the non-government sector are unreasonable. How does one assess 'the capacity of the community supporting the non-government school to contribute'? Was the Australian Parents' Council justified in calling this 'means testing'? Was Mr Hurford correct in vigorously denying the allegation?

The ALP policies on 'bias and discrimination' intrude unnecessarily into the internal life of the school.

The Party's policy on capital funding appears reasonable, except in so far as non-government schools/parents have to justify building programs to Government authorities, whereas State Governments have no obligation to consult taxpaying parents when expending moneys on government schools.

## THE LABOR PARTY (STATE)

The appraisal of the policy of the ALP (Victorian Branch) is based on two documents (both called *Education*). One undated, E 1-31, understood to be the Party's detailed policy was supplied to me by the ALP State Office in November, 1983, and does not appear to differ in detail from a similar document, not so readily available before the 1982 election. Document F, dated March, 1982, was presented as the Party platform for the 1982 election; it was authorised by R.D. Hogg and contained an 'overview' signed by Robert Fordham, Deputy Leader of the Party and then Shadow Minister of Education.

### The documents and non-government schools

As the State 1982 election approached, Mr Fordham wrote two letters to principals of non-government schools dated 8 February and 5 March (corrected copy), 1982. The first letter disputed a media release of Mr Norman Lacy, Minister of Educational Services in the Liberal Party Government. Mr Fordham stated: 'In this statement, Mr Lacy attempts to outline a supposed "secret deal" between my Party and a teacher union, the Victorian Secondary Teachers Association, and further suggests that a Labor government will be intent on withdrawing financial support and destroying the autonomy of the non-government sector. Mr Lacy's assertions are a deliberate and shameful distortion of my Party's position...' In the second letter, Mr Fordham stated: 'The only Education policy proposals to which a Labor Government is committed are those enunciated by the Leader and myself as the relevant spokesperson...'

The background to the allegations will be evident from comparison of Documents E and F, as the former is more detailed and much stronger in tone. It could be read as hostile to claims of all parents in the non-government schools sector to equitable treatment and as a statement of intent to extend control of these schools.

According to Labor Party rules, the decisions of State Conference and the Executive - as long as they are not in conflict with the Federal platform - bind absolutely. However, the electoral policy speech of the Party Leader tends to gloss over unpopular aspects of policy and, in addition, the Parliamentary Caucus has the right to set priorities which determine the rate at which Conference decisions are implemented. The judgment and will of Mr Fordham, Deputy Leader, has been the critical factor determining developments from 1982 to the present day.

In a recent letter to *The Herald* (1 August, 1984), Mrs Joan Kirner, MLC, clarified a procedural point. She wrote: 'Robert Fordham is chairperson of his own Caucus Education Committee - not me. I am chairperson of the party's Education Policy Committee which develops policy for conference decisions and monitors its implementation. It works with the Minister - It does not direct him.' A commentator remarked to me, 'it would like to'!

### Detail of the documents

#### General principles of State Labor policy

* 'Good education is based on the building of a universal, State, quality education system based on the principles of equal opportunity, non-violence and democracy (E-3).'

'The ALP looks forward to the time when the educational needs of all children can be adequately met by the State education system. It believes that this situation can only be achieved by so developing and improving the State system that it becomes overwhelmingly attractive and by building sufficient flexibility into the State system to meet the requirements of conscience of parents and students. It believes that such a system would help greatly to end the social inequality which exists within the present dual State/private system, and to enhance understanding between people of different faiths (E-8).'

#### 'Democratisation and Decentralisation of Education'

* 'Educational 'regions' should not be a large area acting as yet another step in the centralised bureaucratic chain, but be a small grouping of schools serving a local community with the aim of co-ordinating services and development (E-1; cf. F, p.2).'

'The school council is the body responsible for school governance and management within the overall framework of statewide government policy and as such must act as the representative, decision making body for the whole of the school community: the students, teachers, parents and perhaps others. It must accord due regard to the rights and needs of all individuals and groups within the school community and acknowledge areas of special expertise and professional know-how (E-6; cf. F, p. 4).'

School Improvement Program

* 'Labor regards this program as both an important way to improve our State school system and a desirable incentive to schools themselves, to re-examine and broaden their education program in accordance with local requirements... The program will greatly enhance the relationship of the school to its wider community (F, p. 21).'

'Assistance to economically disadvantaged students'

* 'An attack on poverty cannot occur solely in the area of education, but in the field of education, grants must be made available to parents on the basis of need, not academic performance (E-12).'

Government schools

* 'Pre-conditions of parent and student choice between schools would include: the development of clusters of schools on a co-operative basis rather than a competitive basis; the abolition of selective schools; an effective information network within schools and between schools organised by departments, and teachers, for parents, teachers, and students. Zoning regulations will be reviewed to ensure that they are flexible enough to allow the operation of choice within clusters but encourage attendance at the neigbourhood school (E-11).'

'The ALP sees the overall decline in student enrolments in government schools as an opportunity to better use facilities, reduce class size, widen curriculum choice and extend teacher education and leave provisions.' The decline should not be seen as a pressure towards arbitrary 'rationalisation' of closure, but rather a challenge to improve education and increase the student retention rate (E-3).'

'A Labor Government will adopt and implement the principle of staffing our schools according to their established and particular needs; and we will consult with local school communities... (F, p. ii,9).'

'All fees at State Schools...will be abolished...(E-9; cf. F, p. 5).'

Non-government schools

* 'A Labor Government would through a State Board of Education, and a Schools Commission at the Federal level, redirect financial asistance to non-Government schools which most need it, and would continue to act against the present social injustices in education, provided that these schools accept Government standards regarding level of staffing, qualifications of staff, curricula, and are willing to accept all students regardless of race, colour, ethnic origin, religion or social class. They

will be free to control their own curricula and staffing within the charter of the Registered Schools Board...'

'In particular, a Labor Government will abolish the current per capita grants to non-government schools (cf. F, p. 1) and ask all such schools to opt for either non-supported or supported status (E-10).'

'Many people are understandably concerned that the present, unplanned growth of non-Government schools will result in a wasteful duplication of resources and threaten the quality of education in existing schools, government and non-government (F, p. 36).'

### *Critique*

The State ALP's general understanding and explanation of the education of the human person is inadequate. While respecting the goodwill evident in the general principles above, one cannot meet 'the requirements of conscience' by development and improvement...and building flexibility into the State system'. The hostility of the State school lobbies, particularly of the main teacher unions, suggests little hope of achieving the ends sought. To associate the non-government sector with division between faiths, and the State school system with unity and respect, cannot be substantiated.

Many aspects of the policy carry overtones suggesting a drive towards integration of non-government schools. It is a strange variation of 'money or the box' - supported or non-supported status. Reading Document E suggests that the chairman of the Headmasters' Conference spoke with some foresight when he said on 8 October, 1974: 'In my view we have to come to terms with the fact that it is the ultimate aim of the Labor Government to abolish independent schools. It may be that there are individual members of the Government who do not think in this way but, broadly speaking, socialist policy does not support the existence of non-government schools.'

Plans for parents in the government sector commendably aim to extend freedom and develop school character: by decentralisation and reduction of zoning restrictions.

Plans for consideration of government schools where there are declining enrolments are enlightened, as is the attempt to extend parent choice. In this context, it is interesting to note a letter dated 9 August, 1978, which Mr Frank Wilkes, then Leader of the Opposition, wrote to an enquirer. Mr Wilkes stated: 'The present limitation of State funding for non-government schools to recurrent grants will be lifted, so that the [State] Board [of Education] can recommend both recurrent and capital assistance.' This is particularly applicable to schools in developing areas.

Assistance to economically disadvantaged students should not be confined to school programs. State 'maintenance allowance' assistance, available to pupils (Years 7 to 10) in low income families of both sectors, should be extended; see Chapter 29.

## AUSTRALIAN DEMOCRATS

Quotations are from documents supplied from the Leader's office: *Policy Papers, Part 1*, henceforth P; a letter (C) from the Hon D.L.Chipp dated 16 August, 1983, illustrating a response to an enquiry; papers by Senator Michael Macklin - *Australian Democrats and State Aid (M1), Education for the future of Australia (M2), Education - a Democrat perspective (M3).*

### Attack on Liberal/National Party Coalition

* The Australian Democrats believe that the [then] Federal [Liberal / National] government has deliberately provoked the divisions that currently exist between the government and non-government schooling systems (M1).

### General principle

* Our ultimate objective would be to make the State system of education so good that no one would need or want to send their child to a non-State school (P).

### Rights

* The Democrats rejected an amendment moved by the Opposition in 1983, to enshrine 'the rights of parents to choose which school their children could attend' (M3). They are concerned with children suffering at the hands of 'parents' wishes' (M3), and have suggested a Bill of Rights for Children and Youth (M2).

### Government schools

*...the control of (State school) education should be devolved as far as possible to local communities and regions (P). Parents and teachers must be involved in the decision-making process in the school. The school finances must be - as far as is compatible with public accountability - placed under school control' so that the school can plan its own future priorities and allocate its funds accordingly (M1; cf. C).

### Non-government schools

*... financial assistance will be given to independent schools...assistance will generally be given on the basis of need...where recurrent funding of private schools from government funds exceeds funding from private sources then such a school will be deemed to be a 'dependent school' and will be required to have open entrance and controlled exits (M1). (To supply) the seeds of policy advance... state schools will continue to be totally funded by the State... The private school will be totally funded privately... 'Independent state schools'...would be funded by means of a set grant...at 90% of the standard state school pupil cost. (M3)

### Taxation concessions

*...financial assistance will be given to independent schools, both directly by grants and indirectly by raising the level of income-tax deductions for educational expenses...(P)

### Establishment of schools

* For the establishment of government and non-government schools which will be dependent on capital and recurrent funds, the Australian Democrats believe in the necessity of co-operative planning so that any particular area is not oversupplied with schools (M1).

### *Critique*

The criticism of the Coalition shows no understanding of its success in monitoring the attainment by government schools of resource targets which reflected expenditures and standards. These standards, attained through State Budget funding, provided a guide to equitable Commonwealth funding. The irony of the situation was that the Federal Government was here applying a 'needs' policy to protect the interests of schools of lower resource in the non-government sector.

The concept of State schools 'so good that no one would need or want to send their child to a non-State school' is a material interpretation of education. It is a claim for a monopoly. In addition, the argument misses an important point: parents generally choose them, not precisely because they are 'better' (some are; some are not), but because they are different, each having an ethos shared by parents, staff and pupils. State schools are sometimes chosen for the same reason, difficult as the choice may be because of zoning. Senator Macklin's qualification of 'parent rights' protects children from the failure of their parents. Who will protect them from the 'experts' and bureaucracy?

The clause on aid for non-government schools recognises, in part at least, that aid is to parents, not schools as such. However, Senator Macklin has stated this essential principle more effectively in Senate debate: 'One of the major problems with the funding arrangement which we currently have - I believe that it is one which this [Labor] Government is perpetuating and one which can never solve the acute education problems that exist in this country - is the continual operation of funding at an institutional level.' He referred to socially deprived families and stated: 'Regardless of the resource level of the school, those children are still in a deprived educational environment.' [1] This statement also applies to poor children in State schools but, more forcefully, to those at non-government schools where poor families have to find fees from low disposable income.

'Dependent' schools (M1), the most 'needy' when judged by the criteria of private income, are to be placed under the greatest restrictions in respect to maintenance of 'character'. It is, admittedly, a more realistic term than 'independent state school' (M3).

## LIBERAL PARTY

Previous chapters have discussed Liberal personalities concerned with Education issues at both the state and national level. In Victoria, the Victorian Parents' Council always had access to Mr Hamer and to Mr Thompson, as Minister of Education and later Premier/Treasurer. The professionalism of the VPC, particularly in Margaret Gartland's field of education finance, won the respect of Mr Thompson who was always cordial, open, and willing to admit the strength of a case.

The greater heat was, however, to be found at the Federal level. The *Howson Diaries* (1984) contain an entry for 2 December, 1963: 'we have started aid to Catholic schools... It will be expensive to pay for...the Catholic vote'. I have touched on the minds and policies of Menzies, Gorton and Fraser in Chapter 1, and have considered Carrick, Fife and Baume in Chapters 13 and 14. One should not omit Dame Margaret Guilfoyle who, as Shadow Minister in 1975, insisted that her Parliamentary committee did their homework (!) and, as Minister for Finance (1976-82) used an expert eye on programs and expenditures.

Chapter 3 has considered the extent to which calculation may have entered into the political lives of Whitlam, Beazley, and the Labor Left. What of the Liberal leaders? All were committed to a dual system of education and the necessary means to keep it viable (in the Catholic sector) and sustain excellence open to as broad as possible a social spectrum or support new schools (in the non-Catholic sector). From the 1970s on, Fraser and his colleagues were subject to intense pressures; this was largely generated by ignorance or malice in the TV media and some daily newspapers, which failed to consider total funding from both Federal and State sources. In 1974, Catholic bishops communicated their gratitude privately to Mr Fraser. Liberal long-term policies have been for the good of the whole non-government school community, but this is not always recognised by the Catholic 'needs' lobby when it gives lip service to the concept of the 'basic grant' and then focuses on the interests of Catholic schools. The ordinary Catholic is not unaware of the issues, but hesitant to speak because of lack of expertise.

### FEDERAL

Federal Liberal Party policies have not been developed in the detail attempted by the ALP. *Education Policy*, released in association with the National/Country Party in October, 1975, opened with the sentence: 'We believe that education is a prime means for promoting individual self-development and the pursuit of excellence'. The concept was developed by Senator Baume in an address (1983): 'Liberal Purposes of Education'.[2]

In 1975, the Party said that it would examine 'implications arising from the possible introduction of Supported Schools... We would not impose any conditions upon grants to schools which would diminish their independence or destroy their essential character.'

The 1975 document said that the Liberal Party 'would examine in detail the possibility of introducing a voucher system for educational funding'. A voucher is a 'credit' given to parents to meet/defray expenses in the education of their child. As Peter Samuel commented: 'Given the natural antagonism of State education departments to the voucher idea... the chances of even a pilot project being initiated in practice seem poor.'[3] Nevertheless, the Liberal Party Ministers for Education (with the strong support of Malcolm Fraser) did pursue the matter, Senator Baume being the most enthusiastic. The bureaucracy of the Department of Education, supported by Treasury and the Schools Commission under McKinnon, fought a trenchant and successful battle against the idea of vouchers. If the High Court case had declared existing methods of funding unconstitutional, a voucher funding scheme would have been the only option in the ACT and Northern Territory and, as late as 1982, Senator Baume again directed the Department of Education to examine the feasibility of such a scheme.

The Party's *Policy on Education* (May, 1984) saw no reason to take a position on recurrent funding of non-government schools different to that taken at the time of the 1983 election, viz., to continue a 20% basic grant - linked to government school costs - for each child and to provide children in 'needy' non-government schools with a needs grant of up to an extra 21%. It also sought evaluation of the possibility of providing aid to families on a basis of individual need rather than to schools; creation of a 'basic competencies program' and remedial action where necessary; a special $100 m. program over five years to provide computers in schools; and a 'teacher exchange program' between the government and non-government school sectors to promote understanding.[4]

## *Critique*

The Federal Liberal Party's policies on funding non-government schools have not been developed with any great philosophical finesse, but are simple and sound, viz., every child and parent has a right to share in the distribution of public moneys, and special needs should be recognised. Mr Fife has stated: 'It is not a question of how much support is given to schools. The real question concerns the degree of financial support for students and parents.'[5]

Maslen has claimed: 'Traditionally, conservative parties in Australia have favored an elitist, competitive and meritocratic system of education in which a privileged few have access to the best schools and, eventually, to positions of wealth and power.'[6]

This statement fails to recognise that capital grants to the non-government sector in the 1960s went mainly to Catholic schools. Why? They did not have the facilities; they received building grants to enable them to meet standards. The library construction program was based on similar principles. Secondly, the Liberal battles of 1973, 1976 on, did not 'favor' parents or schools when they slowly restored the basic grant (recurrent funding) to the '20%' level of 1972. The additional needs grant also went from lower levels to '20%' and went to practically all Catholic schools, where many, not all, parents had modest incomes.

## Vouchers

A search for the grounds for bureaucratic opposition to vouchers would make a fascinating study. There are doubtless a number of factors: a preference for tinkering with the present structures rather than launching into the unknown; the impact that a successful scheme could have on the relationships between government and non-government schooling; and the danger that Governments and 'systems' bureaucracies could lose 'control' of education. This explains, in part at least, why the Catholic bureaucracies have never supported and, in Victoria, have opposed consideration of voucher funding. [7]

Most who reject the idea of vouchers fail to recognise that parents who pay no tuition fees at government schools and reduced costs at independent schools are enabled to do so by Government grants. Strictly, they are not grants to schools. They are grants to parents on behalf of the child who is supported by them. They would not be paid if the parents did not freely enrol the child in the school. Enrolment provides authorisation for the school to collect on behalf of the child the appropriate moneys to defray educational expenses. In the case of the government school, the moneys pay the salaries of teachers as determined by the staffing establishment; in the case of the independent school, the money is paid by a per pupil grant determined by the level of resource already available. [8]

The essence of a voucher scheme is that the per pupil grant - for all children - should be raised to a realistic level. It would involve an actuarial study, focusing on both the child and the family - as much or more than the school attended. It would employ the taxation system to protect the interests of poor families, particularly those with a large number of school age children, and to reduce net benefits to the rich. The co-operation of the Taxation Office and the collection of additional statistical data would be necessary. Mr Whitlam's Labor Government complained about high-income earners deriving most benefit from the pre-1974 taxation concessional reductions for education. However, the rebate system they introduced (and the Coalition retained) is just as anomalous; the low-income earner is not in a position to initiate total 'concessional spending' of $2,000 (1984) and, without this, a claim for education fees cannot be made. The rebate for spending in excess of $2,000 is 30 cents in the dollar. [9]

The special needs of handicapped or socio-economically deprived children should be met by 'programs' centred on the schools and financed by the Commonwealth or State authorities; in addition, there should be additional generous, means-tested allowances paid to the families of children disadvantaged through any cause.

Studies of vouchers in Australia have never proceeded beyond the level of summary of American experiments in the U.S.A. There is scope for consideration of the feasibility of pilot trial in some region such as Ballarat or Toowoomba, perhaps in what the Army calls a TEWT -

tactical exercise without troops. However, more theoretical studies are necessary, and I approach the issue in Chapter 29.

It is unfortunate that powerful forces would prevent the extension of research to the government sector. Those who would raise the cry of the expense of an academic study might note (see Chapter 19) that the Labor Government sought money ($50,000) and found some of it ($35,000) to ascertain the gut feeling of young people to present funding programs!

## STATE

The policy of the Victorian Parliamentary Liberal Party is presented in *A new Liberal policy on freedom of choice in Education* (October, 1983).

### The right of parents to choose

* The Liberal Party is firmly committed to the U.N. Universal Declaration of Human Rights which prescribes that parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children. A Liberal Government will legislate to embody its policy...into a permanent Act of Parliament. To facilitate choice within the State system, a Liberal Government will progressively remove all zoning and embark on a program to develop 'cluster group' schools to meet the requirements of academically gifted children on a regional basis.

### Non-government schools recurrent funding

* We will repeal any legislation by the Labor Party to vary the level of per capita grants between schools according to some arbitrary formula determination...in addition to the common and basic per capita grant, determined as a fixed percentage of the cost of educating a student in a primary or secondary Government school, a Liberal Government will provide supplementation grants in accordance with needs...the Liberal Party believes that 'needs' fall into two major categories: the ability to pay for the provisions reasonably required by all educators as being of basic necessity in a school; additional provisions required because of special or necessitous circumstances.

### 'New private schools'

* Initiators of new schools seeking Government financial assistance will be required to prepare, at their own cost, an educational impact statement... As a condition for public funding , the impact statement will be required to establish the need for such a school, in the community interest, on the basis of either a general educational demand within the region or meeting a multi-regional ethnic, religious or other requirement that could not be adequately serviced fromn either existing facilities within a region or regions. In all cases, the viability of the proposal would have to be demonstrated with clear evidence.

### *Critique*

The policy statement makes it clear that there is no 'right if it cannot be exercised; also, that both basic and needs grants are paid to parents, not schools'. This statement owes much to Margaret Gartland of the Victorian Parents' Council. When the Liberal Party was in power, she made many submissions requesting that the the principle of right should be embodied in law. When it was suggested that a Labor Government would only remove the clause, her comment was always that, if it did, this would clearly indicate that it rejected the principle.

In 1979, the Liberal Government gave a pre-election promise to raise the 20% grant (as it was then) to 25% by 1984; by 1983, it was 23%. The new policy proposed that it would be 20% and that 3% would be distributed on a 'needs' basis according to a formulation to be decided. While the CECV welcomed the inclusion of 'needs', it expressed 'concern that the common basic contribution would only be 20% of the cost of educating a child in a government school... schools would receive less as a basic entitlement than at present...' [10]

W. Jona, the Liberal Party's Shadow Minister for Education, stated, at a seminar arranged by the VPC on 16 April, 1984, that the basic grant of 20% would 'be built into legislation'. In reply to an interjection, 'It won't go up', Mr Jona responded, 'That's not correct'. However, the 20% was 'a figure that was calculated in conjunction with the Shadow Treasury, having regard to the likely financial situation which will be available to us in 1985.' [11]

In considering 'needs' as the provision of 'essential school educational requirements', the document refers to 'the ability to pay...based on an examination of the fee level'. This gives no guide to the real 'capacity of parents to pay' and does nothing to protect low income parents, making sacrifices to meet fees. If 'means testing' is essential, then it should be applied through the taxation system to all - including parents with children in government schools. An 'educational credit', and differential taxation deduction, is the proper vehicle for dealing with inequalities of income and with anomalies created by current methods of education funding. This was also the judgment of Mr Jona at the VPC meeting, where he said that equity should be achieved 'through the taxation system and not through interference with the equal rights of children'.

The section on the establishment of schools is not satisfactory. The building of schools in a developing area is a matter for the reasonable choice of parents. They must be provided with the means to make their will known as a guide, even a directive, to State Governments, which should not allocate 'scarce resources' by building 'State owned' schools which parents may not want. According to the Liberal Party suggestion, the local people, organised or unorganised, have to go cap in hand, 'at their own cost', with their 'impact' statement. The proposals do not differ from the thinking of Labor Governments and, in the non-government sector, favour powerful systems or non-systemic schools with 'private' financial resources and expertise. Let the Government commission an independent study to see what local residents want.

## REFERENCES

1. Macklin, M. CPD, 19 October, 1983, p. 1735. See, also, letter from Senator C. Mason to the Australian Parents' Council. He stated: 'The Democrats are also looking at a completely new method which will allow funding to be provided on the basis of need of the individual child rather than the individual school.' This excellent initiative is marred by other aspects of Democrat policy. For example, his alleged statements: 'It was irrelevant to talk in terms of 'rights' to funding in a situation where there was so much need... We do not have rights to drive down the road as fast as we like' ( NSW Parents' Council minutes of meeting of the secretary, Mr Stephen Mason, with Senator Mason, 10 February, 1984).

2. Baume, P., 1983, speech to the University of NSW symposium: 'Education - Purpose and Content', 10 November, 1983. See The Australian, 'Liberals look first to develop "civilised people" ', 16 November, 1983, for an edited version. Note: The National Party has a joint policy with the Liberal Party.

3. Samuel, P. 'A review of Labor and Liberal Education policies', ACES Review, 3, no. 1, Nov/Dec, 1975.

4. O'Neill, Margot. 'Opposition promises financial support to all private schools', The Age, 11 May, 1984.

5. Fife, W. CPD, 29 November, 1983, p. 2979.

6. Maslen, G. 'Labor promises to restore trust in schools', The Age, 23 February, 1982.

7. See review by J.V. Faulkner of J. Doyle's 'New schools in a new society', Victorian Catholic Education Bulletin, 9, no. 3, June, 1976; cf. no. 4, September, 1976.

The only detailed official response of CEOV to arguments for vouchers is to be found in a letter from Fr F. Martin in The Catholic Weekly (20 May, 1979, replying to B. McGrath, 15 April, 1979):

> Bernard McGrath refers to the 'deafening silence from the CECV' concerning voucher funding. The silence, in fact, descended only when the meetings recognised that voucher funding could not be considered as an option for the immediate future because there could be no guarantee that under such funding procedure the Catholic character of the school would be preserved... The CECV strongly favours decentralised control of education and a choice for parents - but sees at present better ways of achieving these than a completely untried voucher system.

The best Australian paper on vouchers, more than a decade ago, is due to Gerald Burke ('An economic approach to Government aid in education' in Fensham, ed, pp. 191-208, and in Harman and Selby Smith, eds, pp. 126-138).

8. When Helen Praetz stated: 'Not surprisingly, teacher and parent organisations associated with government schools have strongly opposed the continuation of this unregulated voucher system' (The Age, 16 June, 1981), she recognised that 'grants' are vouchers. See, also, her 'Public Policy and Catholic Schools', 1982, pp. 80-81: 'Implementation of comprehensive voucher funding would entail the massive and costly restructuring of education systems.' If, as she has stated, the present 'grants' are vouchers, why be so definite? She is also worried about 'the practical difficulties caused by possible parental misappropriation of funds', but offers no information as to how this would be effected.

9. Mortensen, K.G. The Age, 7 August, 1973; 25 September, 1974 (also, News Weekly of same date); 'The Finance of Independent Schooling' in D'Cruz and Sheehan (eds), pp. 148-155; The Age, 15 February, 1975; The Catholic Weekly, 15 January, 1976. The latter letter was critical of the rebate system, an issue which was raised with Senator Margaret Guilfoyle as Shadow Minister for Education. On assuming the portfolio, Senator Carrick wrote to me: 'The Government will be looking at the whole rebate system which is already revealing a significant number of anomalies' (9 January, 1976)... 'As you are no doubt aware, the Government is obliged for administrative purposes to accept the new taxation rebate scheme for the time being' (10 February, 1976). However, the Coalition did not have the will for change.

Let us further consider the impact of the $2000 (1984) rebate. Only 8 per cent of taxpayers claimed concessional deductions in 1981. It is unlikely that they would include low-income parents with children in non-government schools. Parents of moderate means with heavy fee expenses at a non-Catholic school would obtain some redress. Well-to-do parents with children at a government school would often have concessional spending (medical, dental, education, rates, life insurance and superannuation) over $2000 and would be able to claim $250 (with a rebate of $75) for general and exam fees, fares, books, equipment, uniforms, extra coaching, kindergarten fees, and subscriptions to parents' associations.

Economists at least recognise what is going on. As R.A. Williams (1984) wrote: 'The combined effect of replacing tax concessions with modest rebates and greatly increasing per capita grants to schools has been to produce a massive switch in government subsidies from the household to the school.' The political implications, arising from the potential offered for control, will become apparent with the passing of time.

10. CECV. Report 1983, p. 15.

11. Jona, W. Tape of Victorian Parents' Council meeting, 16 April, 1984. P. Ross-Edwards, Leader of the National Party (Victoria) said that his Party would increase grants to non-government school children to 25% of the cost of educating a pupil in a government school.

# 17 The Advent of the Hawke Government

## JOHN DAWKINS

The Education platform of the ALP was formulated at the biennial conference of July, 1982. John Dawkins had been Labor's spokesman prior to this date and continued as Shadow Minister. His public pronouncements were consistent with the Labor Party policies summarised in Chapter 15.

Dawkins was born into a wealthy West Australian family. His acceptance of Labor 'principles' originated in his mother's leanings and to 'exception to the belief, the myth, that the traditional representatives of wealth and power have some divine right to rule'. He has claimed that, at school (Scotch College, Perth), 'we were encouraged to believe we were better than others'. Since then, he has resented the 'strong, almost tribal attitudes' of his own class. He was influenced greatly by abhorrence for Australian commitment in the Vietnam War.[1]

Labor member for the marginal seat of Tangney during 1974-75 in the House of Representatives, Dawkins lost his seat in the 1975 election. He re-entered the House as member for Fremantle in 1977. The circumstances of the removal of the Whitlam Government added a bitter edge to his attacks on the Fraser Governments. A graduate in Economics, Dawkins was, in 1984 at the age of 37, a capable Minister for Finance in the first Hawke Government. In this portfolio, he showed himself to be an 'ideas' man. He consulted fully with departmental staff and was open to argument/suggestion/revision. He gave reasons for rejecting advice but, once the talking was over, he insisted on action within strict time limits. A classic example was the introduction of permanent part-time employment in government departments. He submitted three 'White Papers' to cabinet on Public Service reform, the last dealing with the contentious subject of the nation's 250 statutory authorities, popularly (or unpopularly) called 'quangos'.

The resignation in August, 1984 of the Treasury Head, John Stone, appears to have been associated, in great part, with many proposed measures which he regarded as an assault on the integrity and independence of the Public Service: 'affirmative action' because, as Peter Costigan wrote, it restricted 'the bureaucracy's freedom to recruit the best and the brightest irrespective of hormonal make-up'; moves to free the top jobs in the public service for competition from outsiders because Stone believed that 'would politicise it'; the Freedom of Information Act which he thought would lead public servants to temper their advice; a directive that senior public servants disclose membership of associations; and proposals that they state pecuniary and other interests. If Dawkins supplied the blueprint, Dr Peter Wilenski, transferred from secretary, Department for Education, to head the Public Service Board - with Stone objecting strongly - supplied the fine detail.[2]

According to Michelle Grattan, Dawkins, a member of the Centre-Left, is 'a Hayden loyalist charting his future in a Hawke Government'. The 'Centre Left', he asserts, gives 'a voice to a whole group in the Party who are concerned with reforms'. Described by the younger Kim Beazley, then Aviation Minister, as 'obsessed with structures' during his student days, Dawkins aimed to 'produce the impetus for people to want the Government to solve the problems of achieving an equitable tax system, the reconstruction of Australian industry, the renovation of our State enterprises, and a more critical approach to the objectives of our education system'. He was conscious - as the 1984 national Labor conference approached - of the need for Party unity. [3]

### *As Shadow Minister*

Dawkins discussed educational issues in black and white terms, with all virtue in the government system and public-funded extravagance in the 'private' sector. Not all would accept the validity of his statements to a conference of the ATF on 6 January, 1982: 'You and others involved in the education profession have been in a virtual state of siege... There are also important questions of accountability which can only be met adequately through the public system... the need for public systems to be neutral in their values, which objective becomes difficult to achieve outside of a public system.' [4]

One might turn to a 1983 statement on accountability by Brother Bob Wallace, Headmaster, St Edmund's (a Christian Brothers') College, Canberra. He stated:

> It is commonly said that non-government schools are less accountable than government schools... These...neglect the fact that our schools are accountable to parents. They do not have to send their children here; they can withdraw them - something that is not possible with compulsory education in a government system with zoning. We are educationally accountable to the Department of Education. We have to be fully inspected every five years. Government schools have no such inspection or accountability. We are fully, and I stress fully, financially accountable to the Schools Commission which collects every detail of our finances every two years. We are accountable to our owners - here the trustees of the Christian Brothers. We are accountable to the Archbishop - in many and appropriate ways.[5]

In a speech (1982) to the NSWTF, Dawkins stated policy towards non-government schools. A Labor Government would 'not provide funds to support a superior level of resources in non-government schools'. There would be restriction on the 'unplanned development' of new schools. Policies by which Commonwealth funds for schools are 'provided in the context of the achievement of agreed resource standards in all schools will eliminate the built-in drift of funds from government to non-government schools.' Where schools were below acceptable levels with little capacity to improve their situation, 'we will be expecting those systems to increase their contributions...' [6]

These principles boded ill for the non-government sector. In his earlier speech to the ATF, Dawkins had stated that it was 'far better if parents actively want to send their children to government schools rather than that they be forced to do so'. He had now defined means which would secure his desired ends if parents were in any doubt.

## THE HAYDEN EDUCATION PLAN

On 14 November, 1982, Mr Hayden and Mr Dawkins unveiled what was called 'the Hayden Education Plan', which did not depart from the essential principles of the Party platform described in Chapter 15.[7] It was immediately the centre of controversy, involving the Australian Parents' Council, the Federation of Catholic Parents' and Friends' Associations of the Archdiocese of Sydney, and the National Catholic Education Commission. Dawkins met with the NCEC in early December, 1982, but made it clear that he did not intend 'watering down the policy on wealthy non-government schools'.[8] Mr Hawke, who had replaced Hayden as leader of the Federal Labor Party, said that there was 'no room for compromise on the basic principle'.[9]

*The Australian* did not support the Labor position. An editorial stated:

> If the ALP wants a means test in education it should be applied to the incomes of the families involved, not to the schools which their children happen to attend. There is no justice in the principle that the more sacrifices one is prepared to make for one's children the less assistance one should get from the State. In opposing this aspect of the Labor Education policy the National Education Commission is defending a principle which should be supported by all Australians whatever their religious persuasion.[10]

After the ALP had won the 1983 election, another editorial in *The Australian* repeated the same principle:

> 'Needs' are calculated on a complicated formula which is unsatisfactory in that it does not take account of the needs of parents... The fact that a school is 'wealthy' by means of the property it has acquired does not mean that the parents of the students are themselves wealthy... The new approach to state aid will mean that the greater the sacrifice parents are prepared to make, the less help the Government will be willing to give them.[11]

*The Age* took another view in an editorial which stated: 'While many schools are still below the standards regarded as satisfactory, there is no justice in governments pouring funds into schools which have abundant resources and serve to perpetuate an undesirable sense of elitism.' What was regarded as undesirable elitism could, in fact, be excellence in performance. The newspaper seemed to be rather bewildered by the anomalies. For example, 'statistics indicate that the resources gap between Government and private schools has narrowed significantly. On the conventional criteria of class sizes, physical resources, etc., there is less than ever to choose between them - yet more parents than ever are turning away from the Government system.' [12]

A second *Age* editorial found it 'hard to see why the Catholic Education Commission has insisted on making such an issue of it. Labor's policy of allocating all funds to independent schools on a needs basis...would benefit no one more than the Catholic parish schools.' [13] Yet, *The Age* has always demanded action on grounds of principle!

An interesting development was a statement from the ITFA's Patrick Lee, who claimed that many Catholic schoolteachers were disgusted at the NCEC's 'partisan and unbalanced' opposition to Labor's policies. 'There are many teachers in Catholic schools who are committed to social justice and support a pro- per needs-basis of funding.' [14] One might consider it necessary to qualify the statement and claim that those who benefit financially are not always the best judges of equity.

## HURFORD REPLACES DAWKINS

It was alleged that, in February, 1983, John Dawkins 'was shifted from the education portfolio following the dispute with the Catholic Church'. [15] It is possible that the ALP considered it politic to give the task of negotiation to a Catholic, Chris Hurford, but it should also be noted that, with Ralph Willis away and the tax issue on the boil, Hayden appointed Dawkins Shadow Treasurer.

Hurford re-iterated the same education funding policies. He stated: 'Those (schools) which choose to stay outside the community standard will have their Commonwealth grant reduced from 20% to 15% in 1984 and from 15% to 10% in 1985. We are determined to ensure that adjustments are so arranged that they will not harm the schooling of any child or the livelihood of any teacher.' [16] 'The money saved by the reduction of these basic grants to those more wealthy schools will be used to make more available to the more needy ones.' [17] As A.J. Shinkfield, headmaster of St Peter's College, Adelaide, pointed out, grants were already being used at his school to enable up to 10 per cent of the school's budget to go towards remission of fees and to subsidise a loss of $800 per annum for each boarder. [18]

The comment of the Sydney Catholic Federation was that 'future funds will only be received, not as a right, but as a Needs handout'. [19]

Did ALP policy suggest that the total grant to Catholic schools could be lower if the basic grant was reduced and the needs component was kept constant? Fr J. Williams, chairman of NCEC, was reported as saying that 'he assumed Labor would adopt a new method of describing the funding for private schools'. He stated: 'NCEC understanding of ALP policy is that no Catholic school would receive a lower per capita grant under an ALP Government over the next three years.' [20] Elsewhere, he further noted: 'The NCEC policy advocates that grants to non-government schools include a basic grant from both Commonwealth and State Governments for every child plus a needs grant for those children with particular educational needs.' One thing was certain. One could not predict Labor's long-term intentions.[21]

Mr Hurford alleged that the Commission was calling for 'fundamental changes to the present funding arrangements for schools to reduce tensions in Australian education. The Schools Commission points the finger squarely at the Fraser government's policies as the source of these tensions... Our program [is one] of reconciliation... We hope to rid our society of the wasteful and divisive State Aid debate'.[22] Many of these statements had a dubious value. They did no more than acknowledge the obvious fact that there was tension; they did nothing to analyse the circumstances in which the tension had been generated and who was unreasonable and, therefore, at fault.

Hurford had referred to assessment of 'the capacity of the community supporting the school to contribute'.[23] This produced a reaction from the Australian Parents' Council which sent him a telegram: 'Please urgently confirm or deny whether the ALP in government will in any way use criteria which will have regard to the income or the financial circumstances of parents in assessing needs for determining the levels of grants for children in non-government schools.'[24] Hurford indignantly refuted the suggestion that the ALP proposed 'means-testing' parents.[25] In fact, he described the Council's insinuation as 'an act of bastardry', but its accusation was a fair inference from the ALP's published policies.[26]

The APC claimed that Mr Dawkins had given the NCEC an assurance in December, 1982 that a Labor Government would maintain the well-established practice of relating grant increases to non-government schools to State school costs; also, that he had repeated this assurance in a letter to an official of the APC in January, 1983. Now, the Council expressed concern as to whether these promises would be honoured.[27]

The debate left a host of issues unresolved before the election: 'the prior right of parents'; the nexus with government school costs; the determination of the 'community standard'; the assessment of the school community's capacity to 'contribute' to costs; the definition of 'needs'; the expansion and establishment of schools; and the level of capital grants to make this effective.

## DAWKINS AND COSTELLO PRESENT LABOR'S CASE

*Labor Essays (1983)* contains the essay 'Education: Progress and Equality' by John Dawkins and Ray Costello. It offers Labor's vision of 'a just and equal Australia', not one where 'power and wealth are unequally distributed and manipulated' (p. 68). One is reminded of Senator Susan Ryan's statement of the need 'to resist manipulation by the massive institutions of capitalism'.[28]

Various issues are raised in the contribution of Dawkins and Costello. I quote verbatim:

Accountability of government schools

* The Labor Government is not willing to provide the additional funds required to restore the Commonwealth's contribution to the running costs of government schools without an agreement with each of the States about the uses to which the funds are put. The demand for accountability in the use of funds most often focuses on non-government schools. Yet the financial accountability required of these schools by the Commission far exceeds that required of the State systems (p. 76).

'Negotiations' with the non-government sector

* Labor believes that the single most important contribution to the public accountability question will be the achievement of agreements between the funding partners, against which uses of all funds, Commonwealth, State, and private, can be measured. This will be a new form of accountability, whereby the efforts of each of the funding partners can be measured against the agreed objectives. Labor also believes that the publication of much fuller information about the policies being pursued within systems and by schools is important. This is not because the Commonwealth wishes to control these policies but rather because so much acrimony which typifies some public comment arises from a lack of information (p. 76).

The nexus between government school recurrent costs and grants

* We have rejected the use of government average costs as the measure to be used for comparability purposes, because of the large number of extraneous factors contained within that average, and because it tells us little about the resources that are actually available in government schools. Our view is that the question of a fair comparability between government and non-government schools is susceptible to factual analysis based on the actual circumstances of schools (p. 78).

Community standard

We would look to the Schools Commission to establish the community standard, based on its analysis of what constitutes fair comparability between government and non-government schools. It is implicit in this notion that that there could not be a single and uniform community standard for the whole nation and it is probable that a band of resources, rather than a single line, would be required (p. 78).

### *Critique*

I am sceptical about the re-distribution of power and wealth as a result of widespread Government intervention and regulation, administered by an expanding bureaucracy.

The comments on accountability of the States reinforce material in this monograph. Some eight years before publication of *Labor Essays (1983)*, Barry Hill had pointed out that the *Report for the Triennium 1976-78*, 'very sharply demands that State Governments make themselves more accountable for federal funds'.[29] The suggestion of 'negotiations' with non-government schools recalls the Schools Commission's *Report for the Triennium 1979-81* and the criticism it evoked in the 'Minority Report' of E.G. Dunne, who stated: 'The enshrinement of Maintenance of Effort in this Report does not have my support. It is quite anomalous to speak of honouring 'obligations freely undertaken' (6.25) in the matter of the tripartite agreement when one of the three partners is forced through economic necessity to "drink at the trough".' (4.4, p. 156).

With regard to comparing schools of similar structure, I have sought such studies for more than a decade. A 'community standard' might be a useful concept if based on objective data, using identical criteria in both government and non-government schools. Some see this 'standard' as linked to the minimum per pupil grant - in the non-government sector. Nevertheless, my own mind is that people should not be 'hit' because they supplement the education of their son or daughter from their own resources - whether they be fees or working bees. How often have I seen religious who, with the support of parents lacking financial means, poured themselves and their skills into unique developments, so that they often matched the 'wealthy' and gave the children of hewers of wood and drawers of water a faith, a moral formation, and a chance in life.

Geoffrey Barker wrote of 'the most aggressively ideological essay' of Dawkins and Costello. He claimed: 'The writers argue that "there is no future in the State-aid debate beyond increasing polarisation and divisiveness" - and their essay seems bound to achieve those ends.'[30] However, the two authors really do no more than develop Labor policy clearly, and they offered a far more balanced critique than is customary with those presenting this case. The book was dated August, 1983. Senator Ryan had already initiated the measures with, it may be noted, the support of the Prime Minister, Mr Hawke. No attempt was made to establish criteria for 'fair comparability between government and non-government schools'.

## DISHONOURED PROMISES

On 9 December, 1983, Senator Macklin, the Democrat, voted that Labor had 'many dishonoured promises'.[31] First, he claimed that the Hayden Education Plan had stated: 'These initiatives will require discussion and agreement with the non-government sector' (12.4). Secondly, Mr Hawke was supposed to have suggested that any deductions from Group 1 schools would be 5 - not 25 - per cent per annum.[32] Thirdly, the Senator noted that the ALP was 'to maintain in real terms the existing levels of funding for all group 2 and Group 3 schools. That promise has been broken in that Group 2 primary schools will, in fact, be worse off in this financial year and a number of Group 2 schools have, of course, been reclassified as Group 1 schools'.

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2. Costigan, P. 'After John Stone - a government deluge?', The Herald, 17 August, 1984; News Weekly, 'How John Dawkins caused the resignation of John Stone', 22 August, 1984. For something of the philosophy and interpretations of Peter Wilenski, see his 'Dilemmas for social democrats' in Australian Society, 3, no. 1, January, 1984, p. 12, where he applies a quote from Adam Przeworski to the ALP: 'In terms of purely electoral considerations social democrats face a dilemma. They are forced to go back and forth between an emphasis on class and an appeal to the nation.' This monograph also reaches this conclusion.

3. Ref 1, op. cit.

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20. The Age. 'Catholic split widens over State Aid', 3 March, 1983.

21. NCEC Press Release, 17 February, 1983. See, also, The Catholic Leader, 'No cuts likely in our school grants', 27 February, 1983.

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25. Cf. W. West's two articles in The Australian, 'Means test hint widens State Aid split', 23 February; 'State Aid wrangle over means test', 24 February, 1983.

26. Sheridan, G. 'State Aid: the issue which won't die', The Bulletin, 8 March, 1983.

27. APC Press Release, 11.1/83. 'ALP silent on vital school funding issue', 27 February, 1983.

28. Address by Senator Ryan to the annual conference of the Queensland Teachers' Union, 27 June, 1983. See, also A. Peacock, CPD (H of R), 29 November, 1983, p. 2985; P. Baume (Senate), 2 December, 1983, p. 3250.

29. Hill, B. 'High and low marks for school report', The Age, 12 June, 1975.

30. Barker, G. 'Labor essays lose fire of opposition', The Age, 3 November, 1983.

31. Macklin, M. CPD, vote of 9 December, 1983, p. 3586. Cf. his earlier statement (9 November, 1983, p. 2383) that 'these promises have been broken and broken decisively'. He had listed 'the broken promises' in the debate of 19 October, 1983, p. 1734. If Mr Hawke meant a reduction in grants from 20% to 15%, i.e., 5% of government school costs, or 25% of the original grant, there was, of course, no departure from policy, as Macklin claimed.

32. The Australian. 'Full text of the Australian Labor Party Policy Speech, delivered by Mr Bob Hawke at the Sydney Opera House yesterday', 17 February, 1983.

## BACKGROUND

Senator Susan Ryan is an ardent feminist, and like many feminist leaders (Germaine Greer and Carmel Niland) was convent-educated. * All were born in the period 1939-45. Blazey, when writing of their commitment to feminism, says: 'In Ryan's view, this is no co-incidence: it is caused by single sex enrolment... Catholic notions of good works bringing girls into contact with the disadvantaged and the republicanism of Irish nuns encouraging a revolutionary streak.'[1] The nuns instilled in her, she says, 'a sense of responsibility - you don't blame other people if things go wrong, you blame yourself...'[2]

For those who are mystified by Catholicism, one can add to their confusion by noting that the headstrong girls, Susan and Germaine, received encouragement and help from the Brigidine and Presentation sisters respectively.[3] To the nuns, Susan Ryan was 'not only as bold as brass; she was brass personified'.[4] The Minister still retains close links with the Brigidine Congregation and a respect for Catholic education; one of her sisters is a Sister of Mercy. Senator Ryan has said that Catholic schools reflect 'the historical working class background of the Irish in Australia. And they have become a fact of political life. They are also the only system of non-government education in Australia which has attempted to cater for the whole range of the population...'[5]

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The word 'feminist' is a term of abuse to the 'conservatives', a badge of honour for the 'progressives'. Feminism may be defined as the belief that women should be accorded the same rights as men - with regard to social and political equality, and access to educational and employment opportunities. It is not generally understood that the congregations of Brothers/Sisters of the Catholic Church, when recognised as 'pontifical', are autonomous bodies. They worked - at the request of and within a diocese. However, their schools were not subject to a bishop's jurisdiction in temporal (financial or scholastic) matters. If conflict of interests occasionally developed, Rome was quite objective and determined to protect its 'shock troops' - if justice lay in their case. Catholic religious women were conscious of their independence and 'equality' with men. As they moved from their native lands to all corners of the world, their vocation enabled them to adapt and meet whatever needs arose. Catholic girls could not be other than influenced by nuns, by their example and spirit - disciplined but independent and, in so far as their resources permitted, innovative.

In Frank Knopfelmacher's interpretation there are other factors that have created the secular 'sisterhood': technological and social developments rendering the 'traditional' role of women obsolete and 'the influence of the essentially misogynist Irish-Catholic component of Australian culture'. Before accepting the Irish as 'woman-haters', one might first examine Irish songs and study Ireland's political, economic and cultural history! On the other hand, as Ronald Conway claims (The Advocate, 13 September, 1984), life was not easy for the Catholic girl caught half way between 'sinful Eve' and the Immaculate Virgin.

Susan Ryan, with Carmel Niland, also a former student of the Brigidine Sisters, was a founding member of the Women's Electoral Lobby (WEL) in 1972. She was Executive Officer for ACSSO from 1973-75, and was elected to the ACT House of Assembly in 1974. A Federal Senator, representing the ACT in 1975, she fought against the Lusher motion which sought to disallow Commonwealth health funds for women who sought abortions. Two years later, she became the first woman elected to the ALP's Parliamentary Executive. During 1977-83, she was Shadow Minister, at various times, for Communications, Media, The Arts, Women's Affairs, and Aboriginal Affairs.

To understand Ryan's march to power, one has to consider her presence in the ACT, where it was first necessary to get Party endorsement. The ALP there has been dominated by highly educated 'left-wingers'. When Mrs Jean Olley resigned from the Party in 1982, she noted 'the increasing influence of a group of feminists...who are making a concerted effort to take over the ALP in Canberra'. [6]

According to Joan Kirner, Susan Ryan has 'the intellectual ability and philosophical commitment to take on the hard education issues: public versus private schooling, equality of opportunity, parental involvement and access to decision making, and the establishment of links between such areas as art and education'. [7]

It is possible to recognise these qualities and yet be somewhat intrigued by the mechanisms that led to her selection as the Minister for Education and Youth Affairs. Where Whitlam had failed, Hawke was able to induce Caucus to accept a Cabinet of 12 ministers with the remaining portfolios in an outer ministry. It was always understood that one woman would be in Cabinet, and the only serious contender with Susan Ryan was Ros Kelly. As Hurford had no support for a Cabinet appointment, the Education portfolio was offered to Senator Ryan with across-the-board agreement from all factions in the Party. It is also possible that Hawke reached an understanding with her during the difficult days when there was a change of Party leadership from Hayden to himself.

## CHILD RIGHTS AND NEEDS

When Senator Ryan stated: 'The right to education comes from being a child in our society, not whether one's parents pay taxes or not', Senator Teague exclaimed, 'I disagree with you'. In one sense, she is right. 'Being born into this society, in the view of this Government, gives one a right to education.' At this stage, her argument weakened when she said: 'One's parents have the right of choice as to where that education is carried out and we subsidise that choice to the extent that the Budget permits it and according to our philosophy of needs.' [8] On the contrary, many parents have no real choice; their right is not respected. The application of 'subsidy' is not in accordance with parent disposable income and family responsibilities, which are the only true criteria of need. [9]

In addition, as Senator Harradine said in an address to graduands of Signadou College of Education, Canberra, 'it is wrong to dismiss completely the relevance' of an entitlement arising from contribution as a taxpayer. Tax is collected for the education of all children with 'expectation of a just financial distribution'.[10]

The UN 'Declaration of the Rights of the Child, 1959', principle 7, is explicit: 'The best interests of the child shall be the guiding principle of those responsible for its education and guidance; that responsibility lies in the first place with his parents.' It is hypocrisy for Governments to admit the primary responsibility of parents and then deny them equity in meeting what they consider to be their obligations.[11]

Maslen in *School Ties* raises a separate issue, viz., the rights of the child in the schooling situation. He claims: 'I have argued that private schools help perpetuate class differences, and that the strongly doctrinaire schools, in attempting to manipulate the world view of their students, infringe children's rights.'[12] If Maslen wishes to hand the child over to the public authorities, then he should induce them to take responsibility for the failures they make in their educational judgments. With regard to the provision of a 'world view', it is quite misleading to suggest that there is any school, which does not have an underlying philosophy. If one admits the considerable power of the teacher unions in government schools, the 'manipulation' is through secular humanism, interpreted in Marxist rather than Dewey terms.

## PHILOSOPHY AND PRINCIPLES IN FUNDING

Senator Ryan's speeches (and her 1983 Guidelines) are not unique. They express her personal philosophy in no uncertain terms but, what is more important, they are Labor policies with all their thoroughness and inconsistency. She is quite right in saying, 'I did'nt have anything to do with developing our education policies...so I don't know why they've decided to attribute them to some form of fantasy I've had'.[13]

The Minister has stated : 'Public education is under attack'.[14] She has also made this claim during Senate debates, pointing the finger at Peter Baume in particular. He replied: 'A perusal of the Hansard will show that I attacked the teachers' federations with vigour, and I shall continue to do so, but at no stage have I attacked government schools or government schooling. Unlike many members of the ALP, I received half of my schooling in government schools.'[15] The Democrat Senator Macklin voted for the resolution condemning 'the Government for its many dishonoured promises to Australian secondary school students', yet stated: 'I happen to send my children to government schools because I believe they are better schools.'[16] Liberal Party Senators Carrick and Lewis have praised their State school education. As the latter said: 'I remind the Senate that my education history was totally in the government school system... I can look back to the teachers who taught me with pride and remember the dedication they had to their service and their attitude towards their job.'[17] Lewis also stated: 'It is not public education which is under attack; it is the non-government schools which are under attack.'[18]

Whatever response has come from parents, schools, Catholic authorities or NCIS has never involved 'wanton and totally mis-informed denigration of the government system, and invidious comparison of government and non-government schools'. Susan Ryan has admitted that 'this, in my experience, is not something that most people affiliated with the non-government schools go in for, and I hope that you people here this evening will raise your voices against this destructiveness'.[19] She was speaking to a meeting of non-government school parents in Ballarat; it is significant that, in 1983 and early 1984, she did not ask for this co-operation from lobby groups connected with the government sector whose 'denigration' of non-government schooling has been extreme.[20]

While Susan Ryan asked delegates to the 1983 Conference of the QTU: 'How may excellence be fostered?', she has said, 'I do not like the pursuit of excellence. It has elitist overtones.'[21] 'In so far as excellence in education has been traditionally available, it has been available to those who could pay for access to it and whose gender, social class and family wealth fitted them for its expectations.'[22]

This statement does not recognise the quality of State school teachers in the past; and the cultural background of many Brothers and Nuns from Ireland. Young Australians who had vocations to the religious life were often from the poorer classes, but the Irish respect for learning, the in-service education received in the religious congregations, and the development of native talents, provided an understanding of scholarship. The neophytes first learnt from those who were experts in class room practice. They obtained degrees by attending University after a day in school. When parents sent their children to them, it was not generally because of 'a capacity to pay' (the poor paid what they could), but because they valued an education offering 'excellence'.*

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This monograph largely omits reference to educational 'outcomes', and I write, here, only of the Christian Brothers founded in Ireland by Edmund Rice in 1802. The Brothers built schools for the children of the dispossessed, the unskilled and the unemployed. The Irish Times noted that 'when the intermediate system gave them the opportunity of entering into public competition, they swept all before them, and for the first time the staffs of the rich colleges discovered that a day-school in the humblest quarters of Cork, Waterford or Dublin could lead a grade, and capture medals in Classics, Literature, and Science'. When in Cork in 1842, Thackeray was fascinated by 'two boys who were lolling over the quay balustrade and talking about one of the Ptolemys'. He followed three others 'not half so well dressed as London errand boys' to listen to one discussing Captain Ross's voyages in language 'extremely rich and eloquent'. These boys were almost certainly pupils of the Brothers' 'North Mon', a school without equal in Europe in the mid-nineteenth century. The curriculum included a spectrum of sciences and crafts. Conscious of the material needs of their pupils, the Brothers' schools in Ireland taught geometry, mensuration, engineering drawing, trigonometry, navigation, book-keeping and, in some instances, phonographic short-hand. Trade training at a high level was to be found in the unique 'Artane Industrial School' for orphans and destitute children.

Senator Ryan's approach to 'private' schooling is based on concern for 'needy' children, but not on the rights of their parents. Her guiding principles are revealed in the following passage:

> We accept the responsibility to provide public funds to support such choices but the extent to which such subsidy is provided will be on the basis of need. This approach is in conflict with the view espoused by some people that parents who choose non-government schooling for their children have a 'right' or entitlement to government funding of that choice because they are taxpayers. The argument is, of course, specious. No one would argue that their share of the transport budget should be returned to them to subsidise their use of a private vehicle. A government has an obligation to provide services and facilities and to make them available to the public. Freedom of choice is not the issue. What is at issue is whether the choice should be publicly funded and,if so, to what extent.[23]

## CATHOLIC BISHOPS RESPOND

The implications of the Minister's philosophy were clearly spelt out in a response by Archbishop Frank Carroll. He stated:

> That is a clear and unambiguous rejection of any right as right; we return again to the language of concession and the shadow of second-class citizenship. Genuine concern for the needy, often linked with emotive references to wealthy and elite schools, can obscure the fact that basic rights and principles are put at risk for all, if they are denied even to a few citizens. We can happily accept a 'needs' policy but not a 'needs Only' policy... Much of the rhetoric used in the debate is confusing and even misleading. In practical terms the school may be used as the administrative unit for funding, but the basic consideration must always be related to the individual child and, by natural and necessary association, the parents. Even if there is some legitimacy in making comparisons between schools, why is it limited to non-government schools? Any real comparison or measure of disadvantage (and discrimination) must be between all schools or, more properly, between children and families of equal wealth or poverty attending government schools with full funding and those choosing a non-government school with partial or even, as is threatened, no funding at all.[24]

Two Victorian bishops reiterated the same principles in late February, 1984. Bishop D'Arcy of Sale said in the presence of the Minister: 'Is there a suggestion that government money earmarked for education goes to state schools by right, but to independent schools by way of concession or handout.' Bishop Daly of Sandhurst re-stated the position of the Victorian bishops in their 1983 pastoral that 'a needs only basis is not a sufficient criterion for a proper, just and equitable educational policy on funding'.[25]

The statements of Senator Ryan and the Bishops contrast and make nonsense of an *Age* editorial which had stated: 'The old controversy about the principle of "State aid" is dead and unlikely to be exhumed.'[26]

How can one reconcile the views of Forell, *The Age* columnist, and Harradine, the Independent senator for Tasmania?

* 'If there is a fundamental right it is that all children are entitled to an elementary education. The State has a social interest... How these objectives are to be achieved in a democratic and pluralist society is for Governments to determine.' (Forell)[27]

* 'The parents are becoming most concerned that their rights are subject to the political whim of whatever Minister happens to be in power... The Minister's actions have been divisive.' (Harradine)[28]

For Maslen, 'families which spend their "disposable income" on speed boats or holiday homes are no more entitled to public subsidies than those who decide to devote it to their children's education.'[29] Such comment degrades and lowers the value of the intellectual, spiritual and moral formation of the human person to that of 'a speed boat or holiday home' or, in parallel arguments, of some including Senator Ryan, to 'public services and utilities'.[30] In addition, she confuses the responsibility of Government to support the supply of essential services and the creation of a favoured position for government schools in the unique field of Education so that the poor have either no choice or cannot exercise it without hardship.

## THE SEX DISCRIMINATION BILL

From its inception, WEL campaigned for anti-discrimination legislation. Without prior consultation with representative women's organisations, churches or State Premiers, the Fraser Government approved the United Nations 'Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women'. It was signed in Copenhagen in July, 1980 by the Hon R. Ellicott, Minister for Home Affairs in the Fraser Government, and was ratified in 1983 by the Hawke Government - in both instances without any debate in Parliament.

The Liberal Senator Shirley Walters has claimed: 'I believe the convention is a formidable threat to freedom of religion and the protection of women and the family in this country.'[31] Senator Ryan, on the other hand, attacked a 'campaign against the treaty which she said had been the most mischievous and dishonest in her political career... She said the Government intended to use all powers available to it in the pursuit of equality'.[32]

In 1981, Senator Ryan, as a private member, drafted her own Sex Discrimination Bill with the assistance of feminist lawyer friends in WEL and with the backing of the ALP. On 2 June, 1983, she presented an amended version as Minister; after further amendments, it was passed in the Senate on 16 December, 1983, and in the House of Representatives on 7 March, 1984.

According to Forell, 'suggestions that the bills [Federal and Victorian] represent an attack on conventional moral values and the sanctity of the family stem from a view of society which no longer conforms to reality... A more valid criticism is that legislation of this kind involves an increase in Government regulation and intervention and that it could give rise to vexatious complaints'.[33] By vesting administration of the bill in a Human Rights Commission, which is not bound by the traditions of the British legal system, common law is by-passed.[34] Despite four pages of definitions, key words, e.g., 'equality', are not defined.[35] The bill also paves the way for curriculum changes which depart from biological and social realities.[*]

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[*] See a perceptive article about girls in a State technical school by Rosita Larkin ('Bringing in the outsiders. Not treating boys and girls the same', The Victorian Teacher, no.3, June, 1983). She states: 'Thus equal opportunity does not mean treating girls and boys the same. Rather it requires educators to recognise the different needs and provide opportunities for different groups to achieve equal opportunities.' When she told a group of girls that there would be male students and teachers who would support them within the trade classes, the girls shouted in unison: 'But we're different'.

One amazing development is that all Labor women senators and members voted for the 'Classification of Publications Ordinance', permitting X-rated or hard-core pornography to be sold to people over the age of 18. 'New Commonwealth Censorship Procedures for Publications' gives some idea of objectionable 'Category 2' material tolerated for sale from 1 February, 1984. To be fair, the women did not, at first, recognise the results that would spring from the complex legislation. According to G. Scarrabelotti (The Catholic Weekly, 'Parliamentary women silent on pornography issue', 13 June, 1984), it was a vote 'by implication, for a government sanctioned exploitation of women.' News Weekly, 'Radical feminists attack Gareth Evans', 25 July, 1984, reports a strong reaction from Lee Jones of Women against Violence and Exploitation (WAVE); see, also M. Barnard, 'Paradox of pornography', The Age, 31 July, 1984, who quotes her statement that 'human relationships are shown...as being characterised by inequality, exploitation and abuse'. Barnard claims that the Federal Government is more concerned with eliminating 'sexism' (mother in an apron) than in combatting video porn which depicts the domination, humiliation and violation of women. L. Chipman, who describes himself as 'an athiest and, therefore without a religious interpretation of society', describes the relevant laws on pornography as 'incoherent' ( The Catholic Leader, 5 August, 1984); addressing a public meeting in the ACT, he stated that X-rated videos should be banned totally. Senator Ryan has expressed her concern: 'I know people who say they can watch this stuff and not be affected by it. I don't see how that could be' (The Catholic Leader, 'Senator Ryan "disturbed" by X-rated video trend', 16 September, 1984). Both Susan Ryan and Ros Kelly have given significant behind the scenes encouragement to those involved in the 'anti-pornography' campaign in the ACT; they have spoken out publically and within Caucus pressing for tighter controls. Senator Ryan was in large measure responsible for the Government agreeing to set up a Parliamentary Select committee to examine the effects of pornography. For the concern of Senator Tate and Mrs Elaine Darling, MHR, see Barbara Mead, 'ALP move for moratorium on X-rated videos', The Catholic Leader, 30 September, 1984.

State Government employment is not covered by the Bill. Margaret Slattery, secretary of the Australian Parents' Council, noted: 'The employment section includes the definition of de-facto relationships as marriage and non-government schools would be forced to accept this... Parents have a right to choose a certain environment for their children.'[36] After discussion with Archbishop Frank Carroll of Canberra-Goulburn, who sought to protect 'the ethos of the institution having regard to its moral development', Mr Hawke stated that 'there is certainly no scope for a total exemption of non-government schools'.[37] Even where there is 'partial' exemption (s. 38), it is on grounds of 'religious susceptibilities', and will make it difficult for the growing number of 'non-religious', non-government schools to maintain their character. A guide to the Bill has been prepared by the Office of the Status of Women.[38]

## INTERNATIONAL OBLIGATIONS AND AUSTRALIAN EDUCATION

The Koowarta v Bjelke-Petersen Case (May, 1982) was a landmark, when the High Court decided for the Commonwealth against the State of Queensland in an issue centring on an aboriginal group obtaining a pastoral lease. The decision was based on the Racial Discrimination Act (1975), which arose from Australia's ratification of the UN *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination*. In this instance and in the Tasmanian Dam decision (1983), the majority Justices of the Court considered that, even though conventions were not expressed in mandatory language, this did not mean 'any absence of international obligation'.[39]

This principle is particularly relevant in qualifying the interpretation of Gareth Evans, Senator and Attorney General (1983-84), when assisting Senator Lionel Murphy, now of the High Court, to draft a Human Rights Bill in 1974. Mr Evans referred to the declaratory clauses of the UN *Covenant on Civil and Political Rights* as 'empty'. It was because he and his associates maintained that 'the language of the covenant would not support enforceable rights around them' that the draft Bill, when referring to Education, continually used the word 'liberty' and avoided the word 'right'.[40]

Susan Ryan has stated: 'The High Court decision on the Franklin Dam issue had a bearing on the convention'.[41] It undoubtedly strengthened the case for the acceptance in principle of a bill based on the UN *Convention for the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage* which Australia had already ratified. However, what the Minister would be slow to admit - because it runs completely counter to her thinking and that of the Labor Party - is that international declarations/conventions on the rights of parents in educating children carry force, particularly insofar as they relate to the exercise of rights free from discriminatory economic measures and indirect State compulsions. The protection of parents' rights is as important as the preservation of a wild and mostly inaccessible river, but nothing will happen without those concerned matching the will of hard-line environmentalists, feminists, and members of the Socialist Left. This must be demonstrated by thorough philosophical and legal work.

The words of Evans (1 July, 1983) on the Dam case were doubtless carefully chosen: 'This does not generally mean that any treaty into which Australia enters will provide a foundation for legislative action, but it does certainly mean that the Commonwealth can act when there is a clear-cut and specific external obligation to do so, as there was here.' On the other hand, he stated (8 July, 1983): 'The Commonwealth Government and Parliament have a special responsibility to ensure that international obligations we have assumed under multi-lateral human rights treaties are given effect to throughout Australia.'[42] This statement was unconditional; the wording on 1 July was evasive, and it appears that the Attorney General's intention was to be selective.

Davy claims that the 'prior right' of parents in UN *Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)*, Article 26(3), must be consistent with 26(1) which states: 'Education must be free...' and 26(2): 'Education shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups.' Davy also appeals to UNESCO's *Convention against Discrimination in Education (1961)*, 3(d), which states that Governments must not allow 'in any form of assistance granted by public authorities to educational institutions, any restriction or preference based solely on the ground that pupils belong to a particular group'.[43]

What is the problem? 26(1) concludes with the words 'at least in the elementary and fundamental stages'. Yet, it was a Labor Government which, in 1974, made tertiary education, alone, free for a student population that is still largely from well-to-do families. Meanwhile, the necessity for charging fees - to meet even low resource standards in most non-government primary schools - represents 'a barrier to access'.[44] Secondly, in citing 26 (2), can Davy justifiably imply that division has been generated by staff or students from the non-government sector? He also states (correctly) that 'there is a very clear difference between educating students to the complexities of different human thought and behaviour and training students to accept unquestioningly the dogma of one particular area of human thought and behaviour.' This is the old bogey of 'indoctrination', but what are the criteria for picking 'indoctrinators' and shallow educators? I certainly question the truth of a statement in an official ACT report: 'Public schools provide the only place where the full range of differing values, beliefs and attitudes can be held openly and explored in a non-dogmatic way.'[45]

*The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966)*, Article 13.3, was seized upon by Murphy, as Attorney General in 1974, to supply the base for his treatment of education in the draft Bill of Rights. He uses the phrase 'liberty of parents', which is well suited to the long-term ends of those who would grant 'freedom' of choice, but deny support from public funds to enable parents to exercise it 'freely'! Anderson considers that 'the right of parents to choose the education they want for their children is not denied in Australia... The demand to have that choice supported by the public purse is vigorously questioned.' Yet, he recognises that he has confused 'liberty' with 'right', when he later says that 'choice which is only available to the more affluent makes a mockery of justice'.[46]

## THE FAMILY UNIT AND RIGHTS

The comment of the late Peter Thwaites in 1975 is still relevant:

> 'There is a strong suspicion that the present Australian Government does not see the family as the basic unit of society, and has allowed this view to be implicit in a great deal of its legislation, including the Education Acts. Some evidence for this view appeared in the Human Rights Bill as first presented; certain clauses in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights relating to the place of the family in society, e.g., Article 23 (i), were deliberately omitted. Again, the implication is in the Family Law Bill, which some see as virtually abolishing the family as a stable legal unit by over-simplifying the grounds of divorce to such an extent that either partner can easily dissolve the marriage. Most supporters of independent schools believe that unless the idea of the family is maintained and strengthened, even though relationships within it may need to be changed, the whole basis of education will alter. If it is not parents who bear the ultimate responsibility, then it will inevitably become the State, and this has within it the seeds of totalitarianism.'[47]

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3. Cf. Sonia Humphrey on Carmel Niland, 'The long fight for equality', The Australian, 25 August, 1983.

4. Ref 1, op. cit.

5. Speech by Senator Ryan to the Australia - Ireland Bicentennial Conference held at Kilkenny, 21 October, 1983. See, also, her address to the Disadvantaged Schools Program Review Conference, 2 June, 1984: 'Catholic parish schools have traditionally been available to the poor, be they urban or rural, to migrants regardless of their ethnic backgrounds and to aborigines. In some remote parts of Australia, the only schooling available to aboriginal students is provided in Catholic schools.'

6. The Canberra Times. 'Woman stalwart quits ACT ALP', 3 May, 1982.

7. Maslen, G. 'A tough time for Senator Ryan', The Age, 15 March, 1983.

8. Ryan, Susan and B. Teague. CPD, 8 December, 1983, p. 3551.

9. Cf. B. Teague, CPD, 9 November, 1983, p. 2389. According to Teague, 'the most subsidised schools are government schools'.

10. The Canberra Times, 'Harradine speech: education rows deliberate', 8 April, 1984.

11. When speaking at the Monash Public Lectures: 'Labor, Karmel and the Schools' (1974), A. Jones, Director General of Education, South Australia, referred to 'Peter's first epistle': 'Report of the Committee of Enquiry into Education in South Australia 1969-70'. This 'Karmel' report stated: 'The State has also *permitted* the existence of non-government schools.' My italics.

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14. Address by Senator Ryan to the annual conference of the Queensland Teachers' Union, 27 June, 1983. Cf. speech of Mr Justice Murphy to his old primary school at Kensington, Sydney: 'The public school system is under attack throughout Australia' (The Age, 14 December, 1982).

15. Baume, P. CPD, 9 November, 1983, p. 2382. Cf. B. Harradine, ibid., p. 2374: 'I am a product of a primary bush school.' Senator Flo Bjelke-Petersen has stated: 'I chose to send my children to State primary and high schools. I was quite satisfied with them' (CPD, 8 December, 1983, p. 3543).

16. Macklin, M. CPD, 9 December, 1983, p. 3586; 19 Oct., 1983, p. 1734.

17. Lewis, A. CPD, 19 October, 1983, p. 1737, but compare the statement made by a teacher to L. Chipman: 'You see, Chippy, the independent schools are like the state schools used to be.'

18. Ibid. Cf. the comment made by a 'GPS' headmaster to I.V. Hansen in the late 1960s: 'Someone must tell the public what we are doing; we are being attacked on all sides.' Hansen commented ('The Independent School Ethos'): 'It seem that such fears are merely intuitive, and it is worth asking the question whether there is any evidence.' Today, there can be no doubt; the attacks are vicious.

19. Address by Senator Ryan to Parents' and Friends' Association, Ballarat, 22 November, 1983.

20. Note the question of the Tasmanian Senator Margaret Reid to the Minister, CPD, 14 June, 1984, pp. 3017-8. She asked whether the Van Davy/ATF campaign would help 'the Government's professed desire to bring Australians together'. According to an editorial (6 July, 1984) in the Australian Financial Review, 'Senator Ryan appears so far only too willing to accommodate the demands and the prejudices of the teachers' unions.' Such an accusation had far less substance in late 1984.

21. Ref 14, and A. Peacock, CPD, 29 November, 1983, p. 2984; CPD (Senate) - N. Crichton-Browne, 2 December, p. 3255; J. Carrick, 8 December, 1983, p. 3545.

22. Ryan, S. Ref 14, address to the QTU. Statements like this gave rise to Senator Baume's comment that 'the language in her speeches has been that of class struggle and class division', ibid., p. 1724. Her 1984 addresses carry a different tone, e.g., at Geelong College on 17 March, where she spoke of independent schools seeking 'a level of excellence which can be seen as a benchmark for others'.

23. Address by Senator Ryan at Danebank Church of England Girls' School, 24 September, 1983. On an earlier occasion (The Sydney Morning Herald, 10 October, 1981), she had remarked: 'The freedom to send one's children to an independent school is bought at too high a price for the rest of society'; also, cited by P. McGauran, CPD, 7 September, 1983, p. 490; cf. Anderson et al, vol 1, 3.19.

24. Archbishop's House, Canberra. Mimeo.

25. The Advocate. 'School funds: a right for some, a concession for others', and 'Catholic education strong: bishop', 1 March, 1984. Bishop E. D'Arcy quoted significant passages of his address in a letter to The Australian, 28 March, 1984. See, also, The Catholic Weekly, 'Equality demanded', 7 March, 1984, and The Catholic Leader, 'Schools cash - "not a handout"', 11 March, 1984.

26. The Age. Editorial. 'School aid: hard on some, fairer to most', 12 August, 1983.

27. Forell, C. 'State aid, fact & fallacy', The Age, 10 Aug., 1983.

28. Harradine, B. CPD, 9 November, 1983, p. 2372; The Canberra Times, 'School fund guidelines "divisive"', 10 November, 1983.

29. Maslen, G. 'State aid debate is about distribution', The Age, 16 August, 1983; cf. C. Forell, 'State aid a high risk change', The Age, 14 December, 1983.

30. Ref 23; also, Anderson et al, vol 1, 3.16.

31. Francis, Babette. 'UN treaty threat to women', The Age, 10 August, 1983. See, also, her 'The UN's unisex Utopia' in Quadrant, September, 1983, with her letter (November), responding to Kate Caro (October). Cf. Phyllis Boyd, (December).

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33. Forell, C. 'Sex and the Liberal Party', The Age, 21 Sept., 1983.

34. Hawker, Philippa. 'The plain person's guide to the sex bias bill', The Age, 28 September, 1983. See L. Chipman and C. Francis for legal deficiencies in the Sex Discrimination Bill.

35. Wilson, D. 'Sex bill does not define equality', The Australian, 4-5 February, 1984.

36. Cumming, Fia., 'All you ever wanted to know about the sex bill but were afraid to ask', The Australian, 24-25 September, 1983. See, also, APC Review, 'Discrimination Legislation - Danger for Schools', X, nos. 1 & 2, 1984. Note J. Hill, 'Religious Discrimination in NSW: a report', The Australasian Catholic Record, LXI, no. 3, July, 1984, for a rigorous critique. A 1984 issue of 'Newsmonth' (ITA, NSW) stated: 'The ITA has a policy allowing members the right to privacy in their personal lives, and another calling for all aspects of both the NSW Anti-Discrimination Act and the Federal Sexual Discrimination Act to apply to employees in the non-government system.' Cf. G. Scarrabelotti, 'Non-government education under direct attack', The Catholic Weekly, 5 December, 1984, and see correspondence, The Advocate, 8 & 22 November, 1984, in response to an article, 'Private lifestyle in Catholic schools', TACS, July/August, 1984.

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39. Connolly, T. 'The Tasmanian dam case: treaties and the Australian constitution', The Australian Foreign Affairs Record (AFAR), 54, no. 7, July, 1983, p. 308, quoting Mr Justice Dean.

40. Evans, G. 'Why a national bill is necessary - by one of the team who drafted it', The National Times, 4-9 March, 1974, pp. 48-49.

41. Ref 32, O'Neill, op. cit.

42. AFAR, op. cit. , pp. 353-4, citing News Release, 1 July, 1983. The second passage (News Release, 7 July) is taken from a speech of Senator Evans to an Australian Legal Convention.

43. The Teachers' Journal. 'Van Davy sets the tone for 1984', 10, no. 1, February, 1984.

44. Cf. CSC: 'Options for Commonwealth funding of recurrent resources for Australian schools', February, 1984, 2.6.2. See, also, Anderson et al, vol 3, Chapter 6.

45. Armstrong, Lena. 'School body warns of polarised system', referring to publication: 'Reponsibilities for curriculum in ACT Public schools', The Canberra Times, 10 February, 1984.

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# 19 The Guidelines for 1984

## PRINCIPLES AND PROGRAMS

The Guidelines of a Minister for Education and Youth Affairs bear the direct imprint of the Minister, but must be approved by Cabinet. They are Government directions to the Schools Commission and form the philosophical framework for the States Grant (Schools Assistance) Act. This chapter, together with 20 to 22, will consider their content in relation to the pre-election commitments (1982-83) of the Labor Party.

The 1984 Guidelines 'gave greater recognition to the fact that government schools educated the great majority of Australian children.' While there was to be an overall increase in funding for 1984 of 2.8% in real terms, government schools were to be the main beneficiaries. No reference was made to the gains in real terms of fully-funded government schools over the decade, and some relevant data are, therefore, provided in this chapter. Recurrent grants for government schools were to be maintained at 1983 levels in real terms; the additional moneys were allocated to the Computer Education Program, capital funding, and the needs of disadvantaged groups, including those assisted by a 'Participation and Equity' program. PEP is intended as a means 'to encourage young people over the school-leaving age to participate in useful and fulfilling education and training activities'.[1]

## PEP

'Participation' aims to give young people the confidence to stay at school, so that they may improve their understanding and develop skills. Victoria's *Ministerial Review of Postcompulsory Schooling* (Discussion Paper, April, 1984; 2.13-16) considers the factors preventing young Australians from completing full secondary education. It claims that participation 'is affected by social class, ethnicity, geographic location, gender, race, type of school attended and school curriculum'. Family income is a crucial determinant of continuing education; girls and many ethnic minority groups show a greater likelihood of remaining until Year 12; higher levels of participation occur in metropolitan than non-metropolitan areas; curricular alternatives to HSC 'Group 1' subjects have favoured retention.

'Equity' seeks for less advantaged groups a fair share of the benefits of education. The Transition program has been subsumed by PEP.[2]

Funding for 'Participation and Equity' was biased against the non-government sector on the ground that their disadvantaged schools had higher student retention rates and that Group 3 schools had already received a '3 per cent real increase' in recurrent funds, whereas government school grants had not been upgraded.[3] The logic of the argument is uncertain. First, I doubt that a careful estimate of government school per pupil costs would reveal this increase. Secondly, 'retention rates' are not calculated or interpreted without ambiguity. Retention to Year 12 is defined as a percentage: by dividing the number of students in Year 12 in a given year, e.g., 1984, by the number of students who enrolled in Year 7, 1979, and multiplying by 100. This explains why some independent non-systemic schools have retention rates over 100%. If a government secondary school has a low retention rate, it does not necessarily mean that its students are 'disadvantaged drop-outs'. Part of the 'drop-out' is due to transfer to non-government schools at Years 10-12, to TAFE colleges, etc. In some instances, the quality of a school may deter re-enrolment of its students, even though they are not generally 'underprivileged'.

General recurrent funding

Concerning the broader general question of recurrent funding, three important principles were applied to the non-government sector:[4]

* a reduction in the recurrent grants for some (41) schools, so that their value would not be 'as generous as they have been in the past' (s. 5). This undermined the concept of a 'basic amount entitlement'; *

* breaking of the nexus between recurrent grants and average government school recurrent costs. The 'hidden agenda' behind the decision was the prospective decline in government school student numbers, inevitably leading to significant per capita cost increases because of fixed overheads;

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THE FORMULA USED IN SELECTING THE 41 SCHOOLS [5]

A ratio (A/B x 100) was calculated for the 210 non-government schools receiving Group 1 subsidies.

(A) 'Private Disposable Cash Income' was calculated by adding up all fees received by the school, including capital fees for building and other net receipts for tuition purposes from private sources. A factor for debt servicing was deducted from the gross private income. (A) made no provision for future expenses.

(B) 'Resources required to operate at National Average Government School Standards' is the denominator of the Schools Recurrent Resource Index (SRRI). (B) is different from the actual average cost per student in government schools. Accurate data are not available after a two-year delay. Specific purpose grants, not all of which result from additional costs of educating the disadvantaged and handicapped, are excluded. Expenses such as legal costs, building design and supervision, form an essential element of total costs in independent schools, but in the Government system are met by Departments other than Education. (B) does not include interest, insurance, depreciation, workers' compensation, or Government contributions to superannuation; and it refers to recurrent expenditure only!

The ratio (A/B x 100) is not the same as the SRRI rating because the numerator (A) in the above formula is related to income, while the numerator of the SRRI formula is based on expenditure. Where the value of the ratio was 95 or above 95, the Commonwealth Recurrent Grant for 1984 was reduced by 25 per cent.

* a revision of the conditions of funding for new non-government schools. It should be noted that this was not a Ryan initiative; it had largely been agreed by the Coalition Government and accepted by the Australian Education Council in 1982.[6]

## OPTIONS

It is difficult to understand the Minister's statement that 'there can be no suggestion that these schools are being obliged to reduce their educational standards because the recurrent funds available to them have been reduced'. Her 'solutions' were too vague to be of any value: 'For example other broad options are that schools should re-order their expenditure programs by devoting less private income to non-recurrent purposes, or by giving greater emphasis to programs requiring fewer resources, or by marginally adjusting resources to reflect the new levels of grants.'[7]

A document endorsed by the Minister suggested that 'other non-government schools could adopt a similar approach' to some which 'operate a differential fee structure'.[8] It failed to mention that this measure was suited to special rather than general circumstances. It would have entailed increased fees for the average family; the proportion of working mothers with children at non-Catholic schools was already higher than in the community at large.

In fact, the schools had only two alternatives: increase their fees or sack staff, reducing the quality of the education for which parents are prepared to make sacrifices; in the trade, this is called 'reduction of services/resources'. The situation during 1984 in Victoria suggested fee rises/withdrawals/teacher redundancies, with the pattern varying from school to school.

Some schools sought tax-deductible donations for their building funds in lieu of fee increases. Mr W. Beddow, an Assistant Tax Commissioner, indicated that the Department would disallow such measures, but admitted that individuals could contest the decision. The Minister for Finance, Mr Dawkins, told the annual conference of the ATF that these schools, 'otherwise upholders of moral rectitude are encouraging questionable practice'.[9] It was a strange forum for the Minister for Finance to raise the matter when his Party had been significantly helped in its election campaign by ATF levies (tax-exempt) on members.

## SENATOR RYAN'S 'MINOR REDUCTION'

Some of the State Catholic Commissions indicated to the Minister that they were concerned at receiving funds at the expense of other schools in the non-government sector. It was not strictly schools; it was parents. It was incorrect for Senator Ryan to speak of 'a minor reduction in the funds being provided to 41 schools'. The total amount, $4.6 m. in school and tertiary programs of $3.5 billion, was minor.[10] The reduction (25%) in the Group 1 grant, with its impact on most parents, struggling to pay fees, was not minor. The response should not have been dismissed by the Minister as 'political hullabaloo'.[11]

### Victoria's 'minor reductions'

As will be developed in Chapter 27, the Victorian State Government imposed a 'needs' policy - based on levels of SRRI, confidential to the Commonwealth Government and the school. Victoria requested the schools to declare their SRRI value to enable classification. The cuts in per pupil grants to the highest resource schools were severe (53%).

The following Table, due to Margaret Gartland, gives per capita grants (in current terms) to Victorian non-government pupils for recurrent expenditure in 1984, together with variation - decrease or increase - over 1983. It suggests the indifference of the Commonwealth and the State of Victoria to measures that would effect co-ordination and would ensure that Government did not impose a double burden on families - parents and their children, attending schools with a SRRI value above 50. To replace the losses, the increase in the parents' gross income had to be above these figures to allow for taxation.[12]

| | Commonwealth | Victoria | Total Grant | Variation | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | $ | $ | $ | $ | % |
| Primary | | | | | |
| Min Grant | 270 | 177 | 447 | -265 | -37.2 |
| Max Grant | 741 | 402 | 1143 | +85 | +8.0 |
| Secondary | | | | | |
| Min Grant | 428 | 280 | 708 | -446 | -38.1 |
| Max Grant | 1177 | 657 | 1834 | +137 | +8.1 |

### NSW's 'minor reductions'

The NSW Government pursued similar policies in 1983 by 'freezing' (thereby reducing in real terms) grants for children in Group 1 and 2 schools and then, in 1984, arbitrarily cutting grants to children in 15 Group 1 schools by a further 25%. The State ALP set up a 'Working Party' to consider policy, particularly s. 2(g) of the Labor platform: 'Provision of financial assistance to non-government schools on the basis of needs as identified to ensure that all schools operate at acceptable standards.' The report released on 7 July, 1983 added nothing new and recommended that 'the current interim procedure, in relation to per capita grants, be extended to stay in operation until the end of 1984'. This, in effect, meant that the above schools were subject to a further real decrease. The Hon R.J. Mulock the Minister sent an undated letter of explanation, addressed 'Dear Parent', to school principals; it was received on 22 November by AISNSW, which responded with a detailed critique (Circular no. 10) on 29 November, 1983. A significant point was that redistribution from 'a few wealthy schools at the top' - where pupils lost an average of $1.90 per week - gave each of the 200,000 pupils 'in greatest need' an extra 12.5 cents per week!

On 16 March, 1984, prior to the State election, the NSW Parents' Council arranged a Mass Meeting at the Opera House. NSWPC interpreted Labor's policy, as presented by Mr Mulock, as provision of a basic grant - linked to government school costs borne by the State - of not less than 14%, with 'the neediest schools' getting 25% ('basic' + 'needs') by the end of the next funding triennium. The NSW Liberal/National Party Coalition policy was a grant of 25% for all - based on State Budget costs plus Commonwealth allocations to government schools - with 'needs grants for children with additional schooling needs'.[13]

Despite the NSW Labor Party's announcement (September, 1982) of major changes, it has not indicated the 'pool' of funds and the mode of distribution. The new Minister of Education, the Hon R. Cavalier, was generous in the time given to a deputation from the NSW Parents' Council on 19 July, 1984, but gave no assurances on the critical issues.

### Queensland

QCEO, disturbed by developments in Victoria and NSW, ascertained the policies of political parties in Queensland. Its document 'Non-government schooling and the election campaign', dated 10 October, 1983, quoted G. Smith, a Labor Party spokesman: 'For the financial year 1984-85 and beyond, per capita funding will continue at 1983-84 dollar levels with additional funds distributed on a needs basis.'

### South Australia

A 'needs' funding policy was recommended by Professor Karmel and applied in South Australia from 1970. The formula did not differ in concept from SRRI. The estimate of government school costs changed in late 1981 when data were drawn from a 'model' government school (160 students for primary, 350 for secondary). The Tonkin Liberal Government had promised to increase the average level of funding to 25% of the State standard cost by 1985, but the Bannon Labor Government, on taking office in 1982, froze the level at 23%.

## GAP IN SCHOOLS' RESOURCES AND THE NEXUS

Senator Ryan considered that 'without an automatic nexus, we will be able to redistribute funds more equitably on the basis of need to help close the gap between the resources available to most schools and the resources available to a minority of schools. The gap...is very real... The problem with the percentage link formula was that it gave the same percentage increase to all non-government schools, regardless of their different needs.'[14]

It is difficult to follow this argument. The nexus of grants with government school costs has little, or nothing, to do with the 'gap' between high and low resource non-government schools. Apparently, after grants to the 41 schools were reduced, they and their other Group 1 colleagues were to be further penalised on the ground that funding through the nexus was too high. The claim that the new practice did more justice to low resource schools failed to record that, under the nexus, they received double any benefit accruing to Group 1 schools from the use of this measure.

On the other hand, the nexus had a lot to do with the 'gap' between resources in 'average' government schools and in low fee non-government schools. The Minister noted that the gap between government primary schools and Catholic schools, which was 21 per cent in 1974, had grown to 29 per cent in 1981. Senator Ryan let the cat out of the bag when she stated 'that these arrangements, as they had operated, automatically committed the Commonwealth Government to ever-increasing funding of the non-government sector. As costs grew for the government sector, funding of non-government schools 'recurrent costs increased regardless of the needs of individual schools'. [15]

According to 'Australian School Statistics' (January, 1984, 5.4 and Table 5.4) - reporting in December, 1982 prices - 'from 1973-74 to 1981-82, the six State average recurrent cost per primary student increased by 58% in real terms (from $1,114 to $1,760) and the six State average recurrent cost per secondary student increased by 43.8% in real terms (from $1,954 to $2,810)'. There were steady, but less marked (16%), increases in government school recurrent expenditures during the Fraser period, 1976-77 to 1981-82. 'School Standard Costs', used to calculate non-government school percentage grants, have been invariably lower than the current actual costs, e.g., for 1980, the Primary 'standard' was $1,514 compared with an actual of $1680; the corresponding figures for the Secondary were $2,416 and $2,760 respectively.

Then, again, Senator Ryan stated: 'The funding arrangements for 1984 give an extra $5 m. to Group 3 schools in comparison with what they would have received under the percentage link formula.' [16] This equalled the sum lost by the 41 schools. With the majority of schools / students 'needy' in Group 3, receiving the saving, it is hard to see how overall benefit would flow by removal of the nexus, particularly if escalating Victorian costs are any criterion.

However, these are matters of detail. The main danger in the elimination of the 'nexus', as seen by the non-government sector from the perspective of late 1983 - early 1984, was that decisions on funding would be made in a 'budget' context, where the quantum would be determined on pragmatic, political grounds, e.g., 'How much can we cut without a squeal?'; 'How close are we to an election?'. While the nexus was in place, there was a rough sense of justice and non-government school grants had some protection. The Labor Government's Guidelines 1985-88 (or is it 1985-92!) demand a new perspective; the significant factor will be cost movements in the States in relation to the 'community standard'.

In this context, it is worth looking at government school per pupil costs in Victoria.

## GOVERNMENT SCHOOL COSTS IN VICTORIA

In a speech to VICCSO in November, 1983, the Victorian Minister of Education (Hon R. Fordham) stated:

> The 1982-83 Budget, of course was the first Budget of the Cain Government and contained a significant increase in recurrent expenditure compared with the 1981-82 Budget of the previous Government. Last financial year $1813 per pupil was spent from State funds for primary education and $2959 per pupil for post-primary education. This is a major point which should be understood throughout the wider education community and it should be repeated often: Victoria is doing more for government schools than any State Government. Our expenditure per pupil is higher. We are putting more teachers into classrooms. We are now beginning to catch up on the building backlog. I am confident that, even within the limits of this year's Budget, we will maintain our excellent record compared with other States. When you encounter critics, they should be gently, but not too gently, reminded of that.[17]

This statement is significant. First, the figures refer to recurrent expenditure only, not the capital component, which comes in a separate allocation. Non-government schools , on the other hand, have to save and most incorporate some capital element in their fees. 22 of the 41 schools (and 19,950 or 54.7% of the 36,453 pupils) were in Victoria where costs are high; 15 were in NSW; 2 in SA; 1 in WA; and 1 in The ACT.[18]

Secondly, the figures quoted by the Minister are inconsistent with earlier Treasury estimates of $1626 per primary pupil and $2657 per secondary pupil cited by the State Board of Education (Report, July, 1983) and used as the basis for the 1983 grants to non-government schools. While individual non-government schools are hounded for financial detail increasingly - particularly at the Federal level - accountability of the State Governments for their own schools is weak, particularly in the use of Federal funds to meet 'needs'.[19] S. Piperglou, chairman of the education committee of the Ethnic Communities Council of Victoria, said that Federal money for special teachers was being diverted: 'The situation regarding ESL funding is scandalous. The time has come where people within the education bureaucracy ought to be held accountable for how they spend public money.'[20]

The Australian Education Council has refused to release information on per student costs in the various States. Victoria which has had a variable but better record that most States began to be more coy under the Liberal Government after 1980, so that even the Education Department did not know fully the basis for Treasury figures!

On 22 March, 1983, *The Age* published a release from Mr Fordham of State Government grants to non-government schools. He stated: 'I believe that as this involves public money, it ia appropriate that this information should be made available.' The whole exercise was futile, because with equal per pupil grants, the largest sums went to the schools with the greatest number of students. If these schools were customarily identified as 'wealthy', so much the better for misleading conclusions. For example, *Age* education reporters claimed that the list showed that 'the richest and most exclusive schools were the big beneficiaries'.[21]

Mr D.R. White, answering a question in the Legislative Council (Hansard of 14 June, 1983, pp. 2799-2800) on behalf of the Treasurer, gave a rough breakdown of the items of expenditure included in the assessment of 'the equivalent cost' of educating a child in the government system, but stated that 'the detailed calculations will not be made available'.

Examination of Annual Reports of the Victorian Department of Education and of the Schools Commission indicate that the estimates do not include Commonwealth Government grants, debt charges, depreciation, insurance, the employer's contribution to superannuation, and the high capital cost involved in the building program. In addition, 'the equivalent cost' is not 'the average cost'. The practice to the end of 1983 was that stated by Mr Thompson in his Budget Speech for 1979-80: 'the calculation will exclude the effect of the reduction in pupil numbers that has occurred'. Labor's introduction of a 'needs' policy for calendar year 1984 has provided a golden opportunity for avoiding close analysis; the 1983-84 Budget gives no figure for 'the equivalent cost'. In addition, the Government did not bring into Parliament at the end of 1983, the traditional enabling legislation - Educational Grants (Continuation) Bill - for grants in 1984.

Finally, Budgets provide no more than a guide to real costs. According to the Budget estimates (1981-82), the non-government school pupil was to receive a grant which was 22.7% of government school costs; according to actual expenditures (released in 1983 in the Annual Report of the Department of Education), he/she received 18.7%! [22]

## AN UNCERTAIN FUTURE

According to Michelle Grattan, Susan Ryan had 'a good case to sell but needs to learn to market it better and to defuse conflict'.[23] The big problem was that, as Fr J.F.Papworth noted, the Minister had not thought through the impact of her policies, and the non-government sector had no clear picture of the future. He stated : 'It is what Senator Ryan has done (disposed of one system) and what she has not yet accomplished (prepared a new system) that has created the degree of concern now experienced.' [24]

The Minister admitted that 'the Government thinks it entirely reasonable that schools, parents and students want to be able to plan securely for their futures. That was the key advantage of the old "percentage link".' [25] The Guidelines stated: 'To restore stability and predictability in funding arrangements for government and non-government schools, the major new program initiatives in 1984 will be funded on a triennial basis' (s. 5, p.2). She said: 'I give you this guarantee... I will not accept any recommendation from the Schools Commission which does not give non-government schools and their communities confidence in their futures.' [26]

However, those concerned with the good of the non-government school community were concerned with the campaigns conducted by the teacher unions. Some read the statement of Senator Carrick: 'I have not heard a single statement from the Minister or from any member of the Government attempting to put the truth. The fact is that it suits the Government to accept the propaganda of the Van Davys of this world. The Government wants to gain from that propaganda, but it knows nevertheless that it is utterly false.' [27]

This comment was made in the Senate on 8 May, the day when the Opposition moved a censure motion against Senator Ryan on the ground that she had deliberately misled 'Senate Estimates Committee D on 3 May, 1984 by falsely claiming no knowledge of a survey on public attitudes to the funding of government and non-government schools'. She had first sought $50,000 for her department to conduct a survey, but the proposal had been vetoed by Mr Dawkins. Then, the Special Minister of State (Mr Young) agreed to include the issue of funding - at a cost of $35,000 - in a survey of youth attitudes he was conducting.

The censure motion was defeated, because of lack of Democrat support, but not before Senator Macklin had stated, on three occasions, that the Minister had been 'too clever by half', and Senator Chipp had described her 'as less than helpful'. However, the key point was raised by Senator Macklin: 'It seems very odd that such questions should ever be included in the youth survey.' [28] O'Neill alleged, when she published the initial 'leak', that Senator Ryan needed 'to ascertain why our message is not getting through'.[29] During the debate, Senator Harradine noted that 'the Minister still has failed to let the Senate Estimates Committee, or the Senate, know precisely for what she wants the extra $35,000; he suggested that it was part of a continuing "witch hunt".' [30]

It is probable that Mr Hawke was never attracted by the vindictive aspects of the Labor platform and that the general response of the non-government school community, including the hostile parent meetings of 1983, determined his judgments on the Guidelines 1985-88 and the 1984-85 Budget. The extreme position of the ATF did not help their cause, and it was most unlikely that they would transfer their allegiance to the Coalition during the December, 1984 election. Finally, the majority report *Funding Policies for Australian Schools* of the Schools Commission offered a way out.

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2. Address by Senator Ryan to ACSSO conference, 16 October, 1983. Cf. CSC, 'Participation and Equity in Australian schools: the goal of full secondary education', March, 1984, 1.10 - 1.14, and a 1984 brochure, 'PEP is concerned about a fair go for all Australians'; also, 'Resource Kit', Victorian Non-Government PEP program.

The Minister (News Release, M 34/84, 13 March, 1984) sees the reactivation of the Curriculum Development Centre as playing an important role in enabling PEP objectives to be achieved. Cf. her speech in the Senate, CPD, 31 May, 1984, pp. 2271-3.

3. Ryan, Susan. CPD, 9 Dec., 1983, pp. 3582-3. Cf. P. Baume, CPD, 13 June, 1984, p. 2925,: 'I believe that the Catholic system, particularly where resources are poor, should get as much money pro rata as it would have expected under the...transition program.'

4. Address by Senator Ryan at Danebank Church of England Girls' School, Sydney, 24 September, 1983.

5. See NCIS 'Facts and Figures', 2, no. 1, February, 1984, p. 2. Cf. CSC 'Options': a discussion paper, February, 1984, p. 27.

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9. Legge, Kate. 'Tax office checks school fees scheme', The Age, 11 January, 1984. Cf. The Age, 'Schools tax scheme vetoed' and '$45 m. tax revenue at stake...', 12 January, 1984, and The Australian, ' "Hit-list" schools catch-up tax plan fails', 12 January, and 'Opposition backs tax avoidance by schools', 14-15 January, 1984.

10. News Release M 94/83, 17 November, 1983.

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12. Easdown, G. 'Cuts will cost $570 - parents', The Herald , 4 August, 1983. See, also, Kerry Lovering's *Cost of Children in Australia* (Institute of Family Studies, August, 1984): 'An Australian family with two primary school children will have costs on average directly attributable to those children of between $4,000 and $5,000 per year. These costs would increase by at least $1,000 per year for teenage children.' (p. 28). The figures do not include costs for housing, transport, child care, medical or dental expenses, and non-government school fees; note her Table 14, p. 26. *Cost of Children in Australia* should be considered in conjunction with Chapters 29 and 30 of the present monograph.

13. NSW Parents' Council. Newsletter, IV, no. 3, April, 1984.

14. Ref 4, op. cit.: cf. ref 8, pp. 1-2.

15. Ref 4, op. cit. Note, also, Helen Praetz in Browne and Foster (eds), p. 44: 'The nexus between government school costs and non-government school subsidies mean that the latter benefit automatically from increased spending in the public sector.'

16. Ref 4, op. cit.

17. Fordham, R. 'All working to develop education policies', School Bell, November, 1983; cf. PD (Legislative Assembly, Victoria), 11 October, 1983, p. 852; 20 September, 1983, p. 707.

18. News Release M 59/83. 'Minister announces subsidy reductions for certain schools', 5 August, 1983.

19. Cf. Ashenden, D. 'Out of the impasse', The Australian Teacher, May, 1983, pp. 7-8, who stated that 'the Catholic lobby (within the ALP) argued for full state aid with no accountability'; see September, 1983, p. 32, for a reply from Fr T.M. Doyle, director of the CEOV.

20. Reilly, G. 'Shortage of English teachers for migrants "scandalous" ', The Age, 28 May, 1984.

21. Batties, Rebecca and B. Birnbauer. 'Fordham releases details of State aid', The Age, 22 March, 1983.

22. See VPC section on accountability in 'Discussion Paper - State Board of Education of Victoria, 20 July, 1983.

23. Grattan, Michelle. 'School's out - and the grades are pretty good', The Age, 5 December, 1983. Cf. Margot O'Neill, 'Memo critical of Ryan over marketing of education', The Age, 3 May, 1984. O'Neill alleged that a confidential departmental minute suggested that Senator Ryan should be seen as closely identified with the Prime Minister and that she should take a neutral position on non-government school funding. Secondly, it stated that government school parents were generally 'not hostile towards non-government schools, even those with high resource levels'.

24. Papworth, J.F. Australian, 5 December; Age, 6 December, 1983.

25. Ref 8, op. cit., p. 2.

26. Address by Senator Ryan to meeting of Parents' and Friends' Association, Ballarat, 22 November, 1983.

27. Carrick, J. CPD, 8 May, 1984, p. 1752.

28. CPD (Senate), 8 May, 1984, pp. 1700-1743; M. Macklin, pp. 1717, 1718, 1721; D. Chipp, 1718. See, also, Estimates Committees D, E and F, 3 May, 1984, pp. 131, 137, 138; Michelle Grattan, The Age, and Ellen Peterson, The Australian, both 9 May, 1984.

29. O'Neill, Margot. 'Ryan drops plan to survey guidelines', The Age, 13 March, 1984.

30. Harradine, B. CPD, 8 May, 1984, p. 1741. E & YA News Release M 126/84 reports release of the survey: 'The New Traditionalism'.

## THE HIT-LIST

'Hit-list' has been coined for those schools with reduced grants in 1984. For once, the non-government sector won in the language debate, as the phrase represented the reality. Senator Ryan commented: 'I must say I don't like the phrase 'hit-list', but I guess we're stuck with it.'[1] It is a striking term, because it implies an intention to destroy or damage; it has alerted economists to the use of a disincentive which is unsound.

The Minister stated that the Labor Party has not got 'any sense of hostility towards the schools which have high resource standards'.[2] She is right; she has sent her son to an ACT 'senior college' (her daughter has matriculated from one), and both schools would be on 'hit-lists' if the criteria were applied.[3] The real issue is freedom to choose non-government schooling without economic discrimination.

## THE RESULT AND AIM OF THE POLICY

Forell said of the 'hit-list': 'What will happen is that a few parents will have to make greater sacrifices to keep their children at the schools of their choice and that some others will have to lower their ambitions and settle for less expensive private schools or the State system.'[4] Senator Ryan has never stated that, while only 2% of schools are on the list, they include 5% of the students. While they represent only 13% of schools, they include 30% of students in the Group 1 classification.[5]

In 1984, there were losses of children from 'hit-list' schools, mainly from those in Years 7-9, including instances where parents were too embarassed to ask for concessions. Students were replaced by those on 'waiting lists'; there were numerous applications from Asian countries, particularly Hong Kong.[6] Principals said 'the reduction in grant did not affect total enrolments, but it did make the schools progressively more elitist, ironically something the Government had hoped to combat.'[7]

This assessment implies a lack of intelligence in the Labor Government. One might agree with Lucy Meo that there is 'a basic psychological malaise abroad among some Labor ideologues... They tend...to lash out in all directions... In most cases they succeed only in failing to pin the tail on the donkey.'[8] However, they know that their policies are an effective way of socially isolating parents, who are well-to-do.

## ENVY?

Envy and/or jealousy towards high resource non-government schools, and children in them, is characteristic of some upwardly mobile and/or alienated classes in the Labor Party. Because of this, it is difficult to decide whether the strong antipathy to these schools involves Envy, or a search for Justice, vitiated by Envy, or a pure and disinterested concern for the welfare of all.

In its mildest form, Envy is displeasure at the good of another; the envious person feels lessened and humiliated when another is more favoured . It is not necessarily Envy to condemn some who, with more money than virtue, have access to 'good things', including a superior education for their children. However, 'privilege' is not confined to the non-government sector, for many students would be disadvantaged compared with those receiving an education with high quality outcomes at, say, Melbourne High School. To assess whether individual anomalies justify 'equalising' is to raise the issue of selective schools in the State school sector, a question on which opinion is divided.

Envy, at its worst, is detected by a lack of balance, prudence and charity, manifesting itself in hatred, calumny, detraction, and general malevolence. H. Turner, MHR, referred to 'envy, hatred'.[9] When Mr Dawkins moved a motion of criticism of the Coalition Government because it had distorted the 'Needs Principle', Mr Coleman (Liberal) said that the motion originated in 'hatred' of Group 1 schools.[10] Colin Howard, the Hearn Professor of Law at Melbourne University, wrote of 'singularly misplaced envy, for many parents who choose private schools are far from wealthy'.[11]

According to St Paul, 'since the Spirit is our life, let us be directed by the Spirit. We must stop being conceited, provocative and envious' (Gal 5:26). St Basil the Great (329-379), whose monastic rule is still followed in the Eastern Churches, saw the origins of envy in the human heart. Noting its gross effects, he believed that it was an incurable vice, or one demanding a miracle for its eradication. Mr Dawkins, describing his years at a non-government school, claimed to find pride and arrogance; see Chapter 17. Unfortunately, Envy - associated with Power - may breed the same vices.

Working class parents know that the offspring of the rich are more likely to succeed. However, they hope that their own children will obtain opportunities through education and, if the school has dedicated teachers, the parents are more likely to be grateful for this good fortune than to be envious of others.[12]

## JEALOUSY?

Jealousy implies a sense of right, on the part of the jealous person, to the exclusive possession of something. For example, policies which provide freedom of expense for some (affluent parents in high quality government schools), and deny equitable support for all parents in non-government schools, originate in a species of pride. According to St Gregory the Great (540-604), who sent Augustine to restore the church in England, it is 'the idea that one is the sole possessor of a given type of excellence'. In relation to the current discussion, it is the claim that the State (or 'the Church') has all the answers, that the potential for 'excellence' lies in any one 'system' alone. There are many opinions in society as to what constitutes 'excellence', and there are many fields in which excellence can be sought and attained. It is encouraged by diversity and freedom for initiative, and it is unwise to give any form of schooling a monopoly, with a claim to all available taxes for primary and secondary education.

We are reminded by St James that 'wherever you find jealousy and ambition, you find disharmony' (3:16). However, those who protest against 'inequality' would reject the idea that they ever seek anything for themselves; they work for 'justice' only.

Senator Ryan asserted 'there is no basis for any presumption' that the setting of Labor's priorities has been 'moulded by ill-will, nor that they reflect favouritism towards some groups in the community, or hostility towards others'.[13] The issue was only in part ill-will to the high recurrent resource schools, sometimes in fine settings. It was the a priori judgment that parents who choose non-government schooling for their children are disloyal to 'society'. They pay fees; therefore, they must be wealthy. This attitude was directed at those, particularly, who were non-Catholic and were making the greatest sacrifices by selecting a school which had chosen or was 'locked in to' high resources.

The Labor policies of 1984 increased tne financial pressure on a number of families; the stability of schooling of children was destroyed. As Andrew Peacock, noted: 'It will most likely miss the target and will do a hell of a lot of damage in the process.'[14]

However, for Mrs Joan Child, member for Henty, there has been 'so much hullabaloo about what 41 schools have lost and so little about real benefits all schools have gained'.[15] Group 3 schools obtained little or no benefit on what the nexus with government school costs would have provided. P. Staples, MHR, put the amount in balance in what he intended as a defence of ALP policies: 'They have used a $4 m. reallocation of resources in a total Commonwealth Budget of more than $3,500 m. as the hysterical argument that this Labor Government is hell-bent on destroying the non-government sector of education in this country.'[16]

The results of a Gallup Poll in early August, 1984 (*The Sun*, 25 August, 1984) suggest that the majority of Australians, including ALP voters, disapproved of the 'proposed Budget cuts in Federal financial assistance to private schools'; more ALP voters considered 'current funding to non-government schools' to be 'too low' rather than 'too high'. The trends were typical in all States. The Prime Minister seemed to anticipate this reaction, and his judgment is evident in the Guidelines issued by Senator Ryan on 14 August and the Budget released by the Treasurer, Mr Keating, on 21 August, 1984.

## CLASS

A State high school principal claims: 'The private school hierarchy perpetuates a class system which discriminates against students who are educated within the State system'.[17] Janet Hunt argues that the acceptance of pluralism can serve to reinforce existing inequalities 'since those whose liberties are usually promoted by pluralist philosophy are the rich, the well educated and the strong'.[18] Helen Praetz maintains that 'it is already apparent that non-government schools mirror social, economic and religious differences. The lack of any common area of socialisation may well entrench these divisions.'[19]

Yet some, on good grounds, wish to form schools united by 'working class' solidarity to obtain the best educational achievement! D'Cruz and Sheehan have stated: 'Children with the best educational facilities in the world - but no common cultural background - will perform appreciably worse, it seems, than a culturally more cohesive group being educated in a tent.' [20] Cultural cohesion may be supplied by nationality and race, by language and above all by religion. In fact, unity in religious belief - as in Catholic schools - supplies a bond when other forms of identity are lacking. Similarly, the cultures of some peoples are no more than a few folk customs if one ignores the place of religion.

It is difficult to know what is meant by 'socialisation' in a State school, and why a State school should be the only source of genuine respect in human relationships. One might advance a thesis that current difficulties in government schools arise from a century of exclusion of any form of effective religious education. If religion is the basis - or in the background - of cultures and of ideals, then its presentation in a professional way might have given children better understanding, enlarged their vision, and offered the State system a means to match the private schools, particularly as it was backed by Government funds. This matter will be further considered in Chapters 21, 25 and 26.

If this interpretation is correct, current Labor policies have their origin in class, not religious considerations. However, the Socialist Left, given strength within the Party and electoral victory, would further restrict 'church' schools - however humble the class for which they catered. Their aims are expressed clearly and directly. As Alan Reid has noted, 'the Socialist Left members regard themselves as the conscience of the ALP and seem indifferent to whether or not the ALP is in power, placing purity of doctrine above electoral wisdom'.[21]

Forell, writing in 1984, contrasted 'the militant, class-conscious, Marxist influenced socialist tradition [and] the strong Irish-Catholic heritage, imbued with ideals of social justice... Most of the party's official support comes from its affiliated unions, some of which are led by men whose political allegiance is not to the ALP but to splinter parties of the extreme Left, including those whose spiritual home is Moscow or Peking.' He referred to the 'corrosive activities and antics of the venomous Socialist Left'. [22]

Senator Baume has said: 'It may be a hidden agenda within the ALP, but it is certainly an open agenda in terms of many of the ALP supporters... Their goals are, first, to contain the non-government system and prevent its expansion; secondly, to impoverish parts of the sector, to drive people out by economic deprivation; thirdly, to increase the amount of regulation and harassment within the sector; and, fourthly, to move steadily towards setting up an environment in which the integration of schools, in spite of the Government's assurances, becomes more likely.' [23]

Senator Teague has noted that Labor's policies are determined by the necessity of retaining the support of 'its own branches, and perhaps the enthusiasm of some of the key teacher members of the ALP who sustain ALP branches in some of the country and city areas'.[24] While the 'no State Aid' extremists of the teacher federations and unions have been discouraged, it is inconceivable that these organisations will passively accept a Labor Government which does not inhibit non-government schools and create difficulties for parents in the exercise of choice outside the government sector.

## SECTARIANISM

The word 'sectarian' has been variously interpreted as 'bigoted', 'divisive' or 'intolerant', and is often restricted to the hostility between churches or 'sects' which has marred Australian history and led to political and social separateness. It is now acceptable to argue for recognition of 'multicultural', but not 'multi-religious' education. It is worth noting that, without cultural assertion, the Catholic community - low in class and despised in religion - could not have retained its identity. The role of the schools and teaching religious was, of course, pre-eminent in enabling Catholicism to survive as a religious and social force in Australia. An analysis in Chapter 21 suggests that the seeds of religious division are still there but, as Michael Hogan claims, 'redirected and softened'. He suggests that they appear in 'highly politicized issues as abortion and permissiveness'. This may well be, but he also claims that 'religion is a much less important part of the explicit and implicit curriculum than in an earlier era. More often now the moral content of religious education emphasises religious tolerance rather than differentness'. [25]

Gillies claims that 'the sectarian issue has been created by others and not the Government'.[26] If he means that the Labor Party is not guilty of religious sectarianism, he is right; it recognises the voting power of parents with children in Catholic schools; it acknowledges the 'need' of Catholic schools where they are demonstrably poor; it has a small, but influential, Catholic presence in the Federal and some State parliaments. However, the Labor Party's official educational principles, while often applied pragmatically, are based on socialism and 'class sectarianism'.

If Marion Harper, VICCSO executive member, provides the official policy of her organisation, then 'sectarianism doesn't come from opposition to State aid, it comes from its very promotion. It is sectarian to divide our multicultural nation into ethnic and religious ghettos, denying our nation's children the opportunity to share together the richness and diversity of each other's religion and culture.' [27]

According to Van Davy, in his presidential address to the 1984 ATF conference, 'Government funding of private schools gives private operators the "choice" of dividing society along sharp class and sectarian lines'.[28] 'We are committed to a democratic society and that's not just rhetoric and baloney. The government school system is consistent with the ideals of democracy... It is an institution which has the capacity to really weld a multi-cultural society together and cut across class, social and ethnic lines...'[29] For Marginson, 'fostering two competing sectors of education cannot heal divisions. Instead of building fences between our children, we would help them to learn to live together'.[30] Their analyses are quite inconsistent with the facts. For example, the 19 Catholic inner-city primary schools of Melbourne, seven of them with over 30% of non-Catholic and non-Christian children, play an important role in promoting unity and understanding by means in accord with the wishes of parents. The ATF (and ACSSO) would certainly want to create a unity which they dictated and directed, and in which religious education played no part.

Justice Michael Kirby, chairman of the Australian Law Commission, has been influenced by ATF and ACSSO representations or what he describes as 'growing sensitivity in the general community to what has been happening.' He has stated: 'I am no expert in education, let alone educational funding. I do not pretend to know the basis upon which the Schools Commission decides its classifications of need and its funding program.' However, he owed 'a duty of support to the children of most ordinary Australians ...who cannot afford private education'. He did not wish to be numbered among those who 'were content to stand quietly by as observers to the steady comparative decline of funding of government schools... People who, like me, took advantage of public education, must speak up for it...when the proponents of private education...speak out loud and clear.' Mr Justice Kirby wished 'to arrest the socially expensive shift towards fully-funded private education'. He quoted the inscription above the Old Bailey under the golden dome and beneath the statue of blindfolded Justice: 'Defend the widows and the children of the poor.'[31] They should be defended wherever they are found.

Davy, Marginson, Harper and Kirby are disputing the practicability of Ryan's claim: 'We wish to bring together all sectors of education in Australia, not to divide them.'[32] Hawke said that the first twelve months of Federal Labor Government has seen 'the end of confrontation - we were a divided society fighting one another'.[33] Senator Ryan has referred to 'our commitment to consultation and consensus'.[34] On the contrary, decisions and announcements (prior to mid 1984) on funding non-government schools contributed to 'division'.

George Georges, the Socialist Left Senator from Queensland, stated: 'Mr Hawke is able to wield tremendous power; his popularity is extraordinary. I think that power should be muted; it leads to all sorts of excesses...' He does not seem to realise that the Prime Minister's 'popularity' with the electorate has been the cause of Labor's 'standing', which would be steadily eroded by systematic implementation of the policies of the 'Left'.[35] Mr Hawke can take credit for the 'Accord', for sensible economic management, for a working relationship with the ACTU, and for some wage restraint. He has shown no more ability to control damaging strikes than during his presidency of the ACTU in the 1970s. He has been fortunate in the partial recovery associated with the lifting of the drought and restoration of vitality in the U.S. economy. Following the meetings of parents (1983), the Prime Minister assumed personal control of the Government's schools' policy and created a more relaxed climate.[36]

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Pilate, yes, but whose truth, whose compassion, whose justice?' If strong men can weep as TV Channel 2, 3 May, 1983, and radio documentary series, 1984, from 3AR recall the fate of the 8th Australian division, adolescents might learn the meaning of compassion by studying the response of Australians of their age to hardship. Stan Arneil's books provide a starting point. Cf. B. Hill, The Age, 'Nippon very sorry...many men must die', 2 June, 1984.

Others have pointed to envy as a force in Australian life. A Victorian cattleman commented on most of the 'conservationists' - academics and suburbanites - to P. Blazey, 'Mustering up support for the high country', The Weekend Australian, 5-6 November, 1983: 'You know what really motivates them. It's envy of our freedom in the mountains.' Kath Walker, the distinguished aboriginal poet, told D. Broadbent: 'Fear and envy based on ignorance seem to dominate white attitudes towards Aborigines' ('A republic in which all share', The Age, 2 February, 1983). For Laurie Short, Australia's social problems are 'jealousy, envy and greed' (Rowena Stretton, 'Now he's on Short time', The Herald, 9 July, 1982).

R.G. Kitchenn, 'State Aid for non-State schools' in the Australian Humanist (1971) and in Harman and Selby Smith (eds), p. 89, saw 'distrust, suspicion, envy and contempt as between various groupings'; some would see the DOGS and ATF as major sources of division in Australian society today.

12. Cf. Connell et al, p. 196, and Gay Hawkins, 'Discipline a new perspective', The Australian Teacher, February, 1983: 'I think there is a bit of a tendency to lump everything into socio-economic disadvantage and to say "oh well, what can you expect"?... However, I think we've seen enough evidence which does show clearly that working class parents...value schooling immensely.' This is also the view of Dr McKinnon; see Chapter 10 for his address to ANZAAS, mimeo, p.5. See, also, C. Tuckey, CPD, 30 May, pp. 2536-2539, quoting an internal Department of E&YA memo which stated: 'Government school parents are generally not hostile towards non-government schools (even those with high resource levels) and indeed identify with them with educational excellence. They do not see funding of non-government schools as an important issue.'

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# 21 Division, Religion and Values

The previous chapter has considered certain practical effects of the 'hit-list'; it showed that its rationale derived from a crude separation of Australians into classes in which 25% of the population are considered to be 'class-separatists' and a 'divisive' influence - in the schools, if not in the streets in which they live, the work-place, and in the defence of the nation. I now consider this aspect in more detail, including the place of differing philosophies of education.

## DIVISION?

The Anderson Committee considered that religion was 'no longer a source of deep division within the community and State aid is no longer primarily a religious issue in the sense of one set of beliefs against another'.[1] This is not the view of Morris West, novelist and former Christian Brother. Returning to Australia after the mid-1960s, he considers that the divisions - religious, social, racial and sexual - are 'sharper than people want to admit. They're just as sharp as when I left. I'm surprised, coming back, how close the passions lie to the surface'.[2]

According to Anderson et al, 'Radford College has provided a focus in the ACT for a debate on the funding of schooling which has been growing nationally in intensity and divisiveness during the last decade.'[3]

There has been 'division' between Protestant and Catholic, even if it has not developed beyond Protestant resentment at inequity in the distribution and impact of the school-based 'hit-list'. Protestant parents with children at non-government schools fully appreciate that the policies giving rise to tension originate in the Labor Left, with the support and pressure of the ATF and ACSSO. The fact that the Catholic community is not responsible is not the point. The Protestant thinks, but has avoided putting it in crude terms, that there is not sufficient reason why individual Catholic parents of higher income escape 'the axe'. If comparison is limited strictly to within the non-government sector, then the well-to-do Catholic with children in low resource/high grant schools is either prepared to accept an inferior education or is obtaining, 'on the cheap', a good return from dedicated staff.

Headmasters of non-Catholic schools have expressed their concern. Brian Scott of Sydney's Knox Grammar School noted a 'sharp increase in discord and dissatisfaction' in the non-government school community.[4] David Dyer, of Camberwell Grammar, fears sectarian divisiveness.[5] Paul McKeown of Canberra Grammar School considered that 'it is a pretty invidious arrangement, and it is divisive too because of the contrast between the way the Catholic schools have been treated... (In addition), the teacher/pupil ratio in the ACT government schools is much more favourable than it is here.'[6]

Frank Little, Catholic Archbishop of Melbourne noted:'It has been made to appear that Catholic schools have gained advantage by depriving their friends in independent schools. What has been the result? We now have a bitter sectarianism running riot. It has been described to me as the worst in living memory... Many interpretations are expressed. Some say it has been a specific political ploy engineered to achieve the sectarian effect. Others say that the "divide and conquer" policy has been deliberately introduced.' [7] Bishop Dougherty of Bathurst spoke in similar terms: 'In recent months some seeds of unjust discrimination, and therefore of profound division, have been thrown into the furrows of justice...by certain decisions at the level of government.' [8]

Mrs Judith Roberts, President of the Federation of Parents' & Friends' Associations of Independent Schools of South Australia, and Vice President of the APC, has noted: 'Our school communities need to maintain and improve the co-operation and liaison with our Catholic colleagues as we fight together to keep Government support for the non-government sector. Our opponents would love to divide us - we cannot afford disunity, and survive. If one of us fails in the fight for funding, we will both fail.' [9]

## MR HAWKE'S ASSESSMENT

Mr Hawke was not so concerned in February, 1983, when he said:

> I think some parts of the Catholic educational hierarchy, and perhaps some of the hierarchy itself, had a mistaken view about what our intentions were...if we applied our policy of need in the area of private wealthy schools, they seemed to fear that there may be some growth of the sectarian argument', and that they'd get caught up in the backlash of it. Now I think they exaggerated that fear... and I certainly don't want to see any growth of sectarianism or the old State-aid argument and so on. So I was prepared to allow a flexibility there but no compromise on the basic principle. And I believe if we have a four-year phasing period... I'm certain that we will have a situation in the community of understanding the correctness of our principle... [10]

I did not accept the Prime Minister's analysis and certainly not his 'solution'. In the final days before the 1983 election, Mr Hawke promised that, during the life of the present Parliament, all children would receive a grant, even if on a diminishing scale. When, in a letter dated 13 April, 1983, the Australian Parents' Council sought clarification from Senator Ryan, she replied: 'At this stage, I am only able to tell you that the Government is reviewing the implementation of all its election promises in the light of the Budget.' In an address to the National Press Club on 22 February, 1984, Mr Hawke said: 'No new arrangements will be implemented without the fullest possible consultations with non-government schools, and I give a guarantee that I will be fully involved in this process. I will not only be interested in seeing that all views are heard but, with Senator Susan Ryan, will aim to ensure that the

Government's objectives in this area are carried forward in so equitable a fashion that they have the full support of the interested parties.'

In a lead-up to the NSW March, 1984 election, Mr Hawke stated: 'State aid will not be allowed to become an issue under my Government... The level of assistance we considered appropriate for needy schools could only be achieved by a slight redistribution of funds away from a small number of schools which had the highest level of private income.'[11] On the contrary, if one adverted to the statement of Catholic bishops, it was an issue. The movement of funds from 41 schools was slight in the Budget, but not for the individual parent; it was followed by similar penalties in Victoria and NSW. What was 'slight' was the flow of funds to needy non-government school parents.

## RESPONSIBILITY FOR 'DIVISION'

### Non-government schools?

A submission (1983) to Senator Ryan from Marist College, Pearce, ACT, referred to the Anderson report on Radford College in these terms:

> The assertion that the present dual schooling system helps reproduce divisions in Australian society amounts to an allegation that it is non-government schools which bear the responsibility for such divisions. No evidence is presented to support this very serious allegation. It appears to rest, to a large extent, upon the submission from the ACT Chapter of the Australian College of Education which is given a weight in the Anderson Report (9.6 - 9.8) quite disproportionate to its contents. The Chapter's very short submission shares with the Report the weakness that its assumptions are stated as facts.

The ACE Chapter submission considered that non-government schools would only be educationally desirable if they accepted 'the challenge to promote the common good and not sustain social divisiveness'. At a meeting of the Chapter, Dr Greg Hancock, the Chief Education Officer of the ACT Schools Authority, spoke of 'the semi-hysterical response' to the Anderson Report. On the contrary, the meetings described later in Chapter 28 were accompanied by valid critiques and among them was an assessment of Marist College. It maintained that 'the Chapter's submission must reflect seriously on the standing of the Australian College of Education as an impartial body of professional educationalists'.[12]

Writing in 1970, Burke considered that 'despite the fears expressed in recent advertisements by the Loyal Orange Institution, the evidence available on the divisive influences of denominational schools in the United States and Australia gives little cause for concern'.[13]

### Government schools and urban demography

Burke also noted that 'while government schools cater for particular areas they are unlikely to expose a pupil to all the social classes in a community: this would require the abolition of private schools and the transportation of pupils between suburbs (as attempted in the Negro ghettoes) to equalise the social balance in the schools. Even where the social classes of a community are represented within a school, it is not obvious that this necessarily has much effect in lowering barriers.'[14]

Senator Ryan, in answering a question from Senator Baume, stated that 'in the inner city region or working class areas in the western suburbs of Sydney, there are very clear disadvantages' as compared with schools in the middle class, affluent communities.[15] These differentials in the government sector are of long standing and have persisted, partly because Commonwealth recurrent grants have mostly been used by the States for 'general' recurrent purposes, rather than 'needs'. Hogan has cited data showing the vast difference in retention rates within NSW state secondary schools. The proportions at the elite Sydney Boys' High and Girls' High in the Bligh electorate were over 90%, compared with Parramatta (30%), Bathurst (20%), Broken Hill (less than 15%).[16] Yet, Labor Governments have not applied discriminatory principles to government schools in 'wealthy' residential areas, as they have in grants to many children attending nearby non-government schools.

## RELIGION AND EDUCATION

Lindsay Thompson recently said to a small group of teachers and parents: 'Why have we got it wrong for so long? I believe the missing link is character training on a religious or moral basis.'[17]

State school teacher unions and substantial components of the Labor Party are hostile to the identification of school education with any form of religious orthodoxy. Maslen expresses their view (and his own) in *School Ties*: 'If religious or other groups want to run their own schools, well and good, although the State should not subsidise them to do so.'[18] According to Chipman, this policy is 'intended to place the various state and territory education systems in a privileged position in the market place which no liberal democrat can support.'[19] This view might surprise R.W. Connell et al, who claim that 'the ruling class and its schools are articulated mainly through a market, while the working class and its schools are articulated mainly through a bureaucracy (or, to put it very strictly, through the State via a bureaucracy)'.[20]

R.G. Kitchenn, a past president of VICCSO, has quoted with approval a statement that 'the religious instruction which is given in State schools is hardly sufficient in either quality or quantity to have a profoundly conditioning effect on young minds'.[21] Parents in the ACT see State school students as receiving 'some smattering of knowledge about many religions but the Christian religion was almost totally excluded'.[22] As St Paul observed shrewdly: 'They will not believe in him unless they have heard of him' (Rom 10:14).

The Durham Report (UK, 1970) states: 'A curriculum which excluded religion would seem to proclaim that religion has not been as real in men's lives as science, or politics or economics.' Decisions on balance in curricula are value judgments, and many fail to admit the intense, dogmatic, pseudo-religious fervour that secular humanism - in its Dewey or Marxist form - inspires. The intended, and accidental, consequence of 'secular-oriented' curricula is to introduce and impose a view of life which is opposite to, and as powerful as, that offered by Christianity.

G.K. Chesterton noted: 'The deepest desire for knowledge is the desire to know what the world is for and what we are for.'[23] The essence of a 'religious' approach to education is the attempt to attain this understanding and so order the world. The Crowther Report (UK, 1959) notes: 'Teenagers need perhaps before all else to find a faith to live by. They will not all find precisely the same faith and some will not find any. Education can and should play some part in their search. It can assure them that there is something to search for and it can show them where to look and what other men have found.' It is nonsense to suggest that the truncated view of man proposed by the secular humanist and Marxist is the consequence of a lofty disinterestedness in which all is openness and light. No education is 'value-free'. To adopt Chesterton's position: 'I am not now arguing which philosophy is better; I am only pointing out that every education teaches a philosophy, if not by dogma then by suggestion, by implication, by atmosphere. Every part of that education has a connection with every other part. If it does not all combine to convey some general view of life, it is not education at all...'[24]

### A Christian school

The expectation of parents for Radford College was that, while the emphasis should be that of an Anglican, Christian school, it should develop tolerance for other religions, based on positive knowledge.[25]

They are saying the same thing as teacher union propagandists for the State system, viz., all education is based on a philosophy of life. A school's 'character/ethos' and curricula are either determined or influenced by governing bodies, principals, staff and/or unions. For example, as the Victorian Ministerial paper no. 4 (April, 1983) makes clear, State school councils have 'no option of asking the school staff' to ignore the Government's non-sexist policies. This means that there is little opportunity for curricula which adequately discuss the roles of husband and wife in the family - their responsibilities to one another and to their children.

True education is an expression of a valid philosophy of life. The Christian maintains that Man/Woman and Nature cannot be interpreted fully by an education which denies or ignores the grounds for God's existence and which, therefore, gives no place to the role of God or his revelation through Jesus Christ.

The Christian believes that God 'said': 'Let us make Man in our own image, in the likeness of ourselves... Male and female he created them (Gen 1:26-27). The manner by which 'Man became a living being' (2:7) is a matter for scientific consideration. However, to be in God's image is to be a spiritual being, a person resulting from the unity of spirit and body. The word 'likeness' excludes the idea that God and the human person are 'equal'.

Kim Beazley said in 1972, when still Federal Shadow Minister for Education: 'If man conceives himself to be a spiritual being... education will be conceived quite differently...' [26] The attributes of God are Knowledge and Love, and the spirituality of Man and Woman is made evident by the search for Truth and by the Love of God and of the neighbour in a spirit of compassion, which means 'to suffer with'. It is to be sharply distinguished from mere pity. For a Christian, this Love is made real by a living faith in Jesus (God the Son made man); by worship; by co-operation in work and play, forgiveness, identification with the sufferings of others, and by hospitality and personal help to all, particularly the poor.

Compassion is concerned with persons rather than theories of class war. Unfortunately, charity (in Latin *caritas* or Love) is now a dirty word - smacking of paternalism. It is now fashionable to besmirch the charitable impulse; everything has to be done in 'justice' by well-paid officials, directed by better-paid officials. Nevertheless, Aquinas has noted: 'Peace is the work of justice indirectly, insofar as justice removes the obstacles to peace; but it is the work of charity directly, since charity, according to its very nature, causes peace.' [27]

The Anderson Report recommended that 'the ACT Schools Authority...should consider how the demand of parents for education with a special Christian character can be met within the Authority system'. [28] A professional analysis would be a fascinating document. [29]

### Catholic education

The Catholic educator, in particular, has been regarded as an 'indoctrinator', using the word in its modern debased form, rather than as 'one who teaches'. While Catholicism allows for that growth in understanding of which Newman wrote in his *Essay on the Development of Doctrine*, it is certainly fixed in the Creed of the early Church. Development is not the same as change, particularly that change which seeks to alter essential Christian dogma to meet new fashions in the philosophical, social or moral order.

The teaching of religion in the classroom should be education, not evangelism. Exposition of the historical and rational grounds for belief is not faith which is a free gift and must be accepted and responded to freely. Catholicism gives its scholars insights into the nature of 'original sin', that propensity to evil evident in Man from the beginning. As a result, the 'Catholic mind' has never been 'pelagian', 'utopian' or 'messianic'. In this respect, at least, Catholic teachers are far less insidious than those who are influenced by the 'historical and material' aspects of Marxist theory and, possibly, its determinism. [30] Catholic scholars, on the other hand, have tended to be flexible when examining the social and economic order. They seek solutions pragmatically from the commandments and the counsels provided by the message of the gospels. The key phrase has always been Luke (12:31): 'Set your hearts on his kingdom, and these other things will be given you as well.' [31]

Admittedly, the teacher unions now attack denominational, including Catholic schools, on other grounds than 'religious indoctrination'. For example, Simon Marginson of the ATF, has claimed: 'The Catholic Church, a successful feudal graft on a capitalist society inculcates through its schools the idea of exclusiveness and a non-sceptical respect for authority. Its schools also show a growing addiction to competitiveness. Such ideas help to perpetuate the class structure of society and the hegemony of dominant ideas.' [32] I taught in one such non-systemic, Category H secondary school from 1956 to 1975. I saw the best and the worst, but I would not have chosen 'newspeak' to describe a complex human situation in which many did not give a damn for the welfare of children in Catholic schools. [33]

Marginson's statement implies two things: the 'successes' of Catholic education are a threat to ATF aims; there is a link between present 'capitalist' and 'class-oriented' society and religion, which is still 'the opium of the people'. On 1 September, 1980, E.L. Wheelwright, associate professor of Economics at Sydney University, delivered the keynote address at a Monash University conference. Among other things, he stated: 'Why is education such a dangerous trade? Because it is so central to the social, political and economic life of society, as has been acknowledged since the days of Plato's Republic.' Pusey [of the University of NSW] argues, said Wheelright, that 'the 1980s will be dominated by conflicts over the governance and control of education because education is central to the life of society...social change generates new demands on education. Pusey is telling us that the educational aims and objectives...amount to nothing less than total personality development. The education system can be seen as an arena of class conflict, the conflict between the educational requirements of the common people and the owners and controllers of capital.' [34] This simplistic Marxist analysis provides one explanation of the ATF's objection to State Aid and for its intense preoccupation with the curriculum, which can orient the development of personality.

## VALUES AND EMPHASES IN EDUCATION

'Values' is an 'in' word. Unfortunately, as philosophers from Aristotle (384-322 B.C) to Dewey (A.D. 1859-1952) have noted, it is hard to define. Most would agree that a 'value' arises from a person seeking some 'good' about which he/she cares or is concerned. The parting of the ways comes in developing a comprehensive understanding of the 'good', and a theory of value must be seen - in the light of a philosophy - as a whole. For some, the pattern and standard of worth are to be found, in Man's own nature from observation and reason, and from Christ's revelation. This 'objectivist' position would be an 'official' Catholic view.

For others, man is evolving; he must make judgments of value according to experience. This is an empiricist, a positivist view in which human beings are continually making new 'rational' decisions as to how they can best adapt to the environment. This 'subjectivist' position is typical of secular humanism, which influences all Australians and their institutions in large or small degree. According to Millikan, 'in too many instances schools are ambivalent, confused or non-specific about what values they actually hold, and what they actually mean in practice'.[35]

Modern education is based on a denial of the need to transmit the religious and classical culture of the Western world to new generations. (This statement should not be taken as rejection of the contribution of Asian cultures which the writer has learnt to respect by being 'in loco parentis' for boarders of Confucian Chinese parentage, and by contact with life in Vietnam.) However, the preference in modern education is to reject a body of principles or of knowledge, and of moral discipline. Instead, we have endless improvisations; curiosities of teachers and students reflect the mood of the hour.

A society can grow in stature only if it conserves an internal order based on the best of its traditions. If the ideals embodied in these traditions are communicated to newcomers and the young, they will find active expression in a living culture. A theory of education which rejects the past uncritically and insists that all wisdom is new is childish.[36]

The modern trend is to stress that the 'affective' life has been neglected for the 'rational'; that we must 'learn to be' (as UNESCO would have it), to obtain 'fulfilment' by 'feeling' and 'experience' in a 'sharing and caring community'. It is a joy to have the friendship of a man or woman who show what the French call 'sensibilité', but this derives not from the psyche generating emotions - which with all of us can be somewhat unpredictable - but from integrity in things of the spirit. If a person thinks and loves in a 'wholesome' way, I accept his or her temperament - sanguine, choleric, melancholic, even phlegmatic, though it may be. In other words, the personality of a truly spiritual man or woman will determine motives and generate feelings and emotions which will be expressed according to temperament.

In the past, teachers learnt how to handle students of different temperament. Boys respected a relationship which recognised that it was no business of the teacher to intrude into the private life of the student. It was 'Sir' for the teacher, even for the Brother, who wished to prepare the boy for contact with adults in the work situation. James Murray, the Anglican religious columnist for *The Australian*, has pointed out that boys were quite happy about the use of surnames. It gave 'a nice sort of anonymity to relationships, a certain neutrality in matters sentimental and preserved that quaint and somewhat subtle relationship between teacher and student'. When Murray was faced with a class of girls, he found that they resented surnames! He changed his methods and was later given a class almost entirely made up of 'Marys'.[37]

To help a friend or a student in personal problems is noble. To intrude into personal affairs and to have boys and girls in mixed groups discuss their sexual changes is an invasion of privacy.[38] Paul Tournier, a Protestant psychiatrist who practised medicine in Geneva, wrote: 'A child's secrets must be respected. Something vitally important is at stake: nothing less than the formation of his person.' Directed at parents, the statement is more pertinent when applied to teachers.[39]

## THE ROLE OF THE SCHOOL

There are two extreme views on the prime role of the school: to promote either the intellectual or the emotional development of the child. An 'intellectual' goal is said to be centred on competition and academic success and achieved through a hierarchical organisation or 'model'. Emphasis on the 'emotional' aspect is said to demand a model in which teachers, parents, and students are all involved, in which there is co-operation rather than competition in study of school-based curricula of 'interest' to the child.

I do not see why one should frame the dichotomy so rigidly. I believe that the school must emphasise understanding and evaluation, while providing a personal emphasis in which care is shown to ensure that the weak are assisted and that the gifted are not retarded. It is for this reason that headmasters must exercise constant vigilance in assessing the implications of subject difficulty / class size and working conditions/time allocation/teacher support. Finally, 'the failure' of a student should be interpreted as a temporary setback to be overcome, with help, by perseverance - perhaps in another direction.

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4. The Australian. 'End confrontation over schools, Hawke urged', 10-11 December, 1983.

5. Dyer, D. in an address to a meeting in Melbourne on 27 October, 1983. Cf. his comments (VPC seminar, 16 April, 1984) on the effect of Federal and State policies during 1983: 'There were clear signs of great divisiveness in the community. Sectarianism has been re-awakened as a result of these actions'. In The Australian, 19 August, 1983, Dyer also referred to 'sectarian divisiveness', stating that Federal and Victorian State Government policies gave 'the impression that the Catholic sector of non-government schools is being favoured'. He wrote in support of D.T. Wright, The Australian, 12 August, 1983, whose wife works so that they may send the children to 'Shore'. Wright noted that not one Catholic school, with similar 'fine buildings and extensive playing fields', was on Senator Ryan's 'hit-list'. 'This fact explains the embarassed but somewhat pleased grins on the faces of my Catholic friends'.

6. The Canberra Times. 'Head of 25 years is proud of his school', 27 November, 1983; see, also, McKeown, 'The educational implications of funding', NCIS conference, June, 1984.

7. The Advocate. 'Schools: how parents rights are wronged', 8 September, 1983.

8. Catholic Observer, Bathurst. 'Foundations of faith and sacrifice', 27 November, 1983.

9. Roberts, Judith. 'Educare or Elitism', NCIS conference, June, 1984.

10. Burns, C and Michelle Grattan. 'Hawke's view of leadership', The Age, 22 February, 1983. Cf. The Age, 'Hawke defends schools policy', 9 November, 1983.

11. Davis, I. 'Needy schools will not receive less aid, says Hawke', The Age, 12 March, 1984, and The Australian, 'Hawke moves to defuse state aid', of same date. The latter report does not do justice to a speech of Archbishop Edward Clancy who stressed, in a general way, parental rights in relation to the 'basic grant'; cf. The Catholic Weekly, 'Robin Hood policy is not wanted', 14 March, 1984.

12. Marist College submission to the Minister for E & YA. See, also, Anderson et al, vol 1, 9.6-9.8, and the comment of G. Hancock, Unicorn, 10, no. 1, February, 1984, p. 94.

13. Burke, G. 'An economic approach to government aid in education' in Fensham, (ed), p. 201, or Harman and Selby Smith (eds), p. 131.

14. Ibid.

15. Ryan, Susan. CPD, 4 October, pp. 1030-1.

16. Hogan, M. (1984), pp. 65-66, citing A. Casey, 'Some high school drop-out rates are over 85 pc', The Sydney Morning Herald, 22 June, 1983.

17. Ellingsen, P. 'The classroom: what really matters', The Age, 29 November, 1983.

18. Maslen, G. in School Ties, p. 275.

19. Chipman, L. 'Failing Australia's children'. Quadrant, Jan/Feb, 1984, p. 36.

20. Connell, R.W. et al, p. 133. See, also, G. Maslen in School Ties, p. 11.

21. Kitchenn, R.G. 'State-aid for non-State schools', Australian Humanist, no. 17, Autumn, 1971, pp. 9-15; no. 18, Winter, 1971, pp. 12-18, or Harman and Selby Smith (eds), p. 86.

22. Anderson et al, vol 2, pp. 45, 50. Cf. I.V. Hansen, 'The Independent School Ethos', a study (1965-67) of the six 'GPS' schools of Melbourne. 'Headmasters tend to rank religion high, if

not paramount' (vol 1, p. 269), but this was not the uniform response of masters and boys. Except for boys at Xavier, less than 25% of those in each of the other five schools testified to the strength of the Christian factor in their school (p. 469). A number of masters in all schools (except Xavier) seemed to regard religion as 'a front of respectability' (pp. 269, 343).

23. Chesterton, G.K. "The religious aim of education' in The Spice of Life (Collection). London: Sheed and Ward, p. 112.

24. Chesterton, G. K. 'A new case for Catholic schools' in 'The Common Man' (Collection). London: Sheed and Ward.

25. Anderson et al, vol 2, p. 50. Cf. Vatican Council II: 'Decree on Ecumenism' (1964); 'Decree on the Eastern Churches' and 'Decree on Non Christian religions' (1965).

26. Address by K. Beazley at the Convocation of Melbourne University, The Advocate, 1 June, 1972.

27. Thomas Aquinas, II-II, Q 29, art 3, ad 3. Catholic publications currently give a great deal of attention to 'justice' issues. See Australian Catholic Relief ACR News (no. 9 Project Compassion, 1984, 'Charity involves justice' on p. 6. CECV's Pivot, 9, no. 1, March, 1984, 'The Catholic School: Gospel values and curriculum' has sections devoted to Justice, Peace, and Unity, but the word 'Charity' is nowhere mentioned. See The Advocate, 22 March (Prue Oldham) and 26 April, 1984 (Babette Francis) for criticism of this issue of Pivot. Cf. Cardinal Ratzinger: 'Instruction of certain aspects of the "Theology of Liberation"': 'Since charity is the principle of authentic perfection, that perfection cannot be conceived without an openness to others and a spirit of service.'

S. Encel, 'Labor's new class takes command', Australian Society, 3, no. 5, May, 1984, quotes Alex Buso's book Meet the New Class (1981), which notes that the 'Old Class' phrase 'compassion for the poor' has been replaced by the 'New Class' 'concern for the disadvantaged'.

28. Anderson et al, vol 1, P. xiii; Recommendation 26.

29. A PhD thesis (Macquarie University, Sydney) by G.M. Rossiter is relevant. National Catholic Research Council Newsletter, IV, no. 1, March, 1984, provides a summary of 'An interpretation of theory for religious education in Australian schools', a study investigating 'relationships between non-confessional religious education in government schools and confessional education in Catholic schools at the level of normative theory'.

30. See L. Chipman, 'The Zealots: Australia's thought police', Quadrant, May, 1984, pp. 16-28, for a view of the 1960s and 1970s wave of academics and teachers. On the basis of description in Maslen's 'School Ties', J.Bowen, Education and Society, 1, no. 1,

1983, is prepared to state: '...it is evident that the children are simply indoctrinated; we must draw the inference that this is also what is happening in Jewish, Orthodox, Catholic, Lutheran, Adventist, Full Gospel and such other schools through which we are given a very quick tour.' Those interested in a more scholarly and balanced approach to this issue, and to the character of the Catholic School in the 1980s, should consult Carmel Leavy's reports (1-3) in Word and Life, November, 1982, February, 1984, and August, 1984. They relate to an in-depth study of 'a private Catholic College in a large Australian city'.

31. This scriptural quotation occurs in Pius XI's 'On Atheistic Communism' (n. 34), which also states: '...although the Church has never proposed a definite technical system, since this is not her field, she has nevertheless clearly outlined the guiding principles...'

I do not consider here the situation in Latin America. It was rather amazing, to see a daily newspaper (The Australian; September, 1984) give such space to the Roman Curia's critique of 'Liberation Theology'. See 'Outlook', 6, no. 11, November, 1984, for a contrasting, less 'conservative', evaluation.

32. Marginson, S. 'The privatisation of Australian schools', Supplement to The Australian Teacher, September, 1982.

33. According to Feodora Fomin and R. Teese. 'Public finance to private schools: the argument of the Karmel Report and later policy', Melbourne University Working Papers, 1981, non-systemic schools are 'the special part of the feudal sector'. Cf. Helen Praetz, 'Birth of a bureaucracy: the Victorian Catholic Education Office', Australian and New Zealand Journal of Sociology, July, 1980, pp. 20-24: 'Yet by 1945, despite the size and scope of the enterprise, the organisation of Catholic schools resembled a form of feudalism, in which the 14 different religious orders in Melbourne each worked independently within a zoned territory under its own hierarchical system of authority.' The use of the word feudalism in this context is emotive; the reference to 'a zoned territory' is misleading, if not incorrect.

34. Wheelwright, E.L., as quoted in The Education Newsletter (The Education Review Association, Melbourne), 2, no. 3, 1981.

35. The Advocate, 'Christ "the model" for educators', 14 June, 1984, quoting R. Millikan.

36. Cf. The (Catholic) Tribune. Editorial. 'The real crisis of education', 18 February, 1971.

37. Murray, J. 'Despite the facade of programmed teaching, Mr Chips is alive and well', The Australian, 24 January, 1984.

38. Partington, G. 'Im(moral) education in Australian schools', Quadrant, June, 1983, pp. 18-24.

39. Tournier, P. 1957 (1968). The meaning of persons. London: SCM.

The following references are taken from Senator Ryan's 'Questions and answers on Commonwealth funding for non-government schools' in *Commonwealth support for non-government schools*, December, 1983). Each quote, presented in italic, is followed by my comment.

## THE BASIC GRANT PRINCIPLE

* *'The basic grant principle takes no account of the fact that more support is needed for the education of some children than for the education of others.'* (2)

### Critique

In a government school, each child receives a basic grant to cover those 'needs' which can be defined as 'the basic necessities of schooling'. Additional 'needs' allocations for children in necessitous socio-economic circumstances have been marginal only.

## MEASUREMENT OF PARENT INCOME

* *'The Government is not able to measure for school funding purposes the income of parents who send their children to non-government schools.'* (3)

### Critique

Incorrect. The Australian Taxation Office has access to the means of parents with children in the government / non-government sectors. This could be used confidentially in conjunction with any scheme providing 'educational credits' (or vouchers). It would, of course, be anomalous to have such a scheme operating in the non-government sector only. In addition, those who support the principle have never denied the 'needs' of children in 'special' or necessitous circumstances; see Chapter 29. *

## CHOICE AND RIGHT

* *'Parents who choose non-government schools can be confident that the Government recognises their right to do so, but the extent to which this choice will be subsidised by the Commonwealth will be determined by the criteria of need. Such a policy will provide a real freedom of choice to all parents not just to those parents who are able to afford the high fees charged by the most highly resourced non-government schools.'* (4)

### Critique

These are very loosely worded sentences. First, at present, parents have liberty, but not 'right'; there is no 'right' in the true sense of the word if it is accompanied by economic discrimination frustrating reasonable freedom of choice. Lionel Murphy, when Attorney General,

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* See pp. 230-232.

(Continued p. 233)

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The problem of offering a means-tested grant for an educational service in both the government and non-government school sectors has been avoided as political 'dynamite'. Organisations such as The Australian Parents' Council have always denied allegations that they have advanced any such proposal. A recurring theme in a series of Monash University lectures: 'Labor, Karmel & the Schools' (March-May, 1974) was 'What is the price of choice?', and a key problem raised by State school lobbyists has been that of 'access'.

Mr Justice Michael Kirby, chairman of the Law Reform Commission, has alleged: 'The reality in many schools is that parents do not choose them. Parents may aspire. But if their children do not fit intellectually, socially, religiously, or ideologically (or all of these), they will not be enrolled or retained.' CECV has produced an excellent document 'Enrolment Guidelines for Victorian Catholic Schools' (second draft, November, 1983) on 'access' and 'expulsion'. The latter issue, with 'suspension', is now relevant in Victorian State schools as part of the debate on 'discipline regulations'.

As I have pointed out in Chapter 16, the question of vouchers has never been seriously addressed in Australia. If the opinion of minorities was sought, I consider that they, like blacks in the U.S.A., would vote for it; see J. McClaughry, 'More Americans support vouchers for schools', News Weekly, 20 June, 1984.

With the exception of Gerald Burke of Monash University, who has written papers on vouchers (see ref 7, Chapter 16; refs 13 and 14, Chapter 21), academic educationalists have been either hostile or silent. What is fascinating is the increasing interest of economists and econometricians, which can be traced to the rise in expenditures on education, the bearing of funding 'principles' and practices on economic equity and income distribution, and the impact of new arrangements between the Commonwealth and the States in the distribution, use and accountability of public moneys. These academics argue from the same principles and reach much the same conclusions as in this monograph.

To consider examples:

Professor Michael G. Porter, director of the Centre of Policy Studies, Monash University, states in his 'On the deregulation of education', Economic Papers, no. 68, 1981: 'Given that many low income families choose to allocate a large chunk of their disposable income to their children's education rather than buy a bigger house, better car, or video tape recorder, then they should not be penalised by the state for so doing. Yet families attaching priority to (private) education are penalised by the current system relative to those who opt for consumer luxuries.'

Professor Richard Blandy, director of the National Institute of Labor Studies at Flinders University, J.Hayles and A. Woodfield write in a paper: 'The economics of education in Australia 1962-1977' (Surveys of Australian economics, Vol 2, ed F.H.Gruen, Allen & Unwin, 1979, p. 122): 'The critical questions are whether there is evidence that bureaucrats are better informed on the advantages of education to low income families than those families are. Is education an efficient redistribution device? How can movement towards equality be expected to occur, and does such a movement take place? What are the costs in terms of reductions to freedom? Many of these issues are simply by-passed in the Australian literature.' Their Postscipt (pp. 155-160) is a devastating attack on the 'dominating lobby group' which makes it impossible for 'parents, unless very wealthy or willing to make savage sacrifices...to escape the sheltered monopoly State system of schools'.

In an address to the June, 1984 NCIS conference, Blandy stated: 'Unfortunately, the bigger and more interventionist governments become, the more necessary direct political action by citizens becomes to defend or achieve their valued ends... Beyond a surprisingly small size, diseconomies of scale set in with a vengeance, resulting from the escalating costs of communication, co-ordination and deciding...' (Mimeo, Conference papers, and News Weekly, 11 July, 1984 ; cf. The Australian, 25 June, 1984.)

Ronald Henderson, formerly chairman of the Commission of Enquiry into Poverty has stated: 'One essential feature of a voucher or cash payment system is that the amount be sufficient for poor parents to be able to pay the school fees for a satisfactory education... I think there is a good case to be made for the proposition that all those who are comfortably off should contribute to the cost of education of their children' (On ABC radio; text in 'Advance Australia', September, 1979). He made the same point in a forum of the Victorian Economic Society (T.Thomas, 'Professor urges school fees system', The Age, 10 October, 1979). The VSTA deplored his proposal that all secondary schools should charge fees and that the taxation authorities should reimburse parents - in part or whole - according to income.

Samuel Ball, professor of education at Sydney University, makes the same point in 'How to reform society with one fell fee', a somewhat flippant article in The Australian, 19 September, 1983. He stated: 'We should introduce fees for children in public schools... You are aghast... We shall means test public school fees... Just like Medicare; this is the essence of fairness.'

S.P. (Peter) Burley, professor of Econometrics at Latrobe University, has considered the application of such principles ('Some comments on needs adjusted funding of schools', 7 November, 1983, and '1984 version',5 March, 1984; see, also, W. Bracken, 'Two papers give perspective on funding for schools', The Canberra Times, 23 February, 1984). Burley considers that it is essential 'to think about the economic condition of students' families, as well as that of their schools'. His analysis relates per pupil recurrent funding grants - 100 per cent in the government sector and three lower levels, with an 'implied tax', in non-government schools - to the income tax brackets paid by wage /salary earners.. Burley proposes that 'at least some part of the benefit to families of public subsidies to their children's education be treated as education for taxation purposes'. If 'net (after tax) grants' for the well-to-do were reduced, it would be possible - within Budget allocations - to increase grants to low-income earners, irrespective of the school their child attended. His scheme allows for 'a pragmatic political / legal exemption for all government school users... Independent school families seemed to accept the government school families implicitly getting an aggregate $1 billion (approx.) tax refund.' In another paper ('Education and Public Finance', Social Survey, September, 1984), Burley has considered education as a 'capital good', with short-term investment and long-term benefits. He suggested 'income-tax-sponsored loan schemes for private school fees, or for treating education-savings funds like superannuation funds (or life assurance) for taxation purposes'.

Patricia Apps, 'The tax unit: An Australian perspective', p. 148 in Head (ed), notes: 'The major allocation of government revenue to children is by public education, with family allowances and other forms of assistance providing a considerably smaller level of assistance per capita.' Or as Porter (op. cit.) states: 'If the money spent on educational subsidies were removed, and used to subsidise those in genuine need or suffering, say through negative income tax arrangements, our community would, in my view, be a good deal more egalitarian than it is today.' Blandy et al (op. cit.) take the same view. Cf. my note, ref 9, Chapter 16, on the paper of Professor Ross A. Williams (1984) which has been the subject of review and comment by R. Gittins, 'Here's an economic model to fan the State aid debate', The Sydney Morning Herald, 9 May, 1984, and P.P.McGuinness, 'Who are worse: doctors or the teachers?', The Financial Review, 25 June, 1984.

P. Saunders' revealing book 'Equity and the impact on families of the Australian tax-transfer system' (Institute of Family Studies, 1982) mentions the word 'education', in passing, once only (p. 14). In discussing the impact of the rebate system, he omits 'the value to taxpayers of concessional expenditure deductions or expenditure rebates' because they are 'difficult to quantify' (p. 26). His comments (pp. 26-29, 55) on the impact of the rebate system (1975-76), therefore, have to be modified in considering the relative positions of families with children at government and non-government schools. When considering the capacity of the latter to pay fees, one might note Saunders' statement: '...the personal tax burdens of moderate income families have increased more than those of their high income counterparts ...the rising tax burden has been greater, at a given income level, the larger the family size... An important finding is...the increased emphasis in family policy over recent years on spouse dependency rather than parenthood as the criterion for granting tax relief' (p. 86).

Denis Wilkinson,'Some aspects of Australian demographic patterns which relate to Catholic schooling' (Federal Catholic Education Office, 6 March, 1981), analyses the 1976 Census. He considers family incomes and type of school attended and summarises the only hard data available. The work is significant, as there is no information from previous censuses, and relevant questions were not asked again at the 1981 Census. This study offers a starting point for assessment of disposable income, remaining after payment of direct schooling costs. (One of his tables: 'Percentage distribution of school-going population by family income and school type 1976' is cited by Helen Praetz, 'The non-government sector in Australian education' in Browne and Foster, eds, p. 42 or her 'Public Policy and Catholic Schools', Australian Education Review, no. 17, ACER, p. 50).

This monograph has already referred to the writer's criticism of Cairns' reduction (1974) of the concession for education expenses and Hayden's rebate system (1975), which had an adverse effect on parents of children at non-government schools, particularly those with large families and low income. The General Concessional Rebate (GCR) scheme effectively denied any taxation benefit for education expenses (or any other concessional expenditure) to more than 90% of taxpayers, a point which is conveniently overlooked by politicians and the Schools Commission in its comments on 'maintenance of effort'. One means of obtaining equity between parents is to increase and allow educational expenditure rebates outside the the GCR. Cf. D. Dineen, 'Restoration of tax concessions', APC Review, no. 1, 1982; and L.A.Eastwood, 'Education cost concessions - a delusion' and O. Potter, 'Who really pays for education...', Annual Conference, 5 August, of the APC.

was careful to use the word 'liberty' when he drafted the Education clauses of his draft 1974 Bill of Human Rights.

Furthermore, (4) provides no definition of 'need', and any movement of moneys on the basis of 'need' is so small that it can do nothing to improve 'freedom of choice'. The fact that parents pay high fees is no evidence that they can really 'afford' them; individual 'sacrifice' is good when personal and truly free, but it should not result from an unreasonable and unjust penalty.

When Senator Harradine wished to incorporate the principle of a basic grant in the Bill before the Senate, Senator Ryan said that she would not accept any diversion by 'a declamatory statement'.[1]

## THE NEXUS

* *'The Government has moved away from the previous automatic nexus because while the nexus was operating, the gap between resource standards in needy non-government schools and average government school standards, far from reducing, has widened. The nexus did not distribute resources between schools on the basis of need: it gave the same increases to high resource schools as it did to low resource schools.' (6)* [2]

Critique

The word 'gap' is used, as elsewhere in the Minister's writings, in two different senses. The concept of 'discrimination gap' was first introduced in Victoria by Margaret Gartland, in NSW by G.E.F. Hughes, and has been developed in my own work to consider the difference between Government funding of a child in a State and non-government school. Breaking the nexus probably saved the Federal Government money in 1984; departure from the nexus did nothing to change the relative resource status of schools within the non-government sector.

In attempting to justify departure from the nexus, Senator Ryan has made admissions which relate to concern about government accountability in calculating government school costs. She stated in Senate debate: '...what was counted or discounted for the purposes of this formula was very much a matter for the judgment of governments and their officials. In the case of most States, the elements of the formula were not matters of public information...' [3]

## BENEFITS TO 'NEEDY' SCHOOLS

* *'The most needy non-government schools, those in funding Group 3, will receive in 1984, in real terms, an extra $21 for each primary student and $32 for each secondary student. There are 1870 non-government schools in Group 3, representing 85 per cent of all non-government schools. This amounts to $5 m. more than these schools would have received under the previous governments's policy'. (7)*

Critique

Many would deny that departure from the nexus would produce a net gain to schools in Group 3. The Minister's further phrase 'a significant increase in resources to these schools' is of doubtful accuracy.[4]

First, the per capita increases were not related to those due under the nexus. Senator Ryan stated: 'The Schools Commission has informed me that government school standard costs for 1984 have increased by 2.6 per cent and 1.1 per cent at primary and secondary levels respectively. Had the percentage link mechanism been continued for 1984, group 3 schools would have received increases in per capita grants of $18 and $12 for primary and secondary students respectively, compared with the increases they will now receive of $20 and $32 respectively. As a result of our Government's initiative, the needier schools - those in category 3 - will receive $5 m. more than they would have under the percentage link formula.'[5] It would have been relevant to spell out the extra resources that could be purchased with 4 cents per child per week in a primary school or 40 cents in a secondary school.

Secondly, the $5 m. was a transfer from a limited number of 'hit-list' parents ( I consider the word more appropriate than schools) to a much larger number of Group 3 parents, producing little effect ($2 primary and $20 secondary) in their funding.

Thirdly, there was ground for questioning the 'Standard Costs' cited in *Target Recurrent Resource Standards Study* (January, 1984), particularly Tables 2.2 and 2.6. They were worked out from estimated December 1982 prices, adjusted for 1984 by a 'Schools Price Index' of 6.6 per cent; the figure appears to be low.[6]

Fourthly, Senator Harradine claimed that uncertainty in future Labor policies was 'heightened by Senator Ryan's pointed refusal...to provide any guarantee that Group 3 schools would receive more after next year than they would have received under a percentage link formula.'[7] Dr Tannock, at the APC conference (1983), gave no assurance that schools would be better off in 1985 without the nexus.

R. Bluer of the ATF considered that the new policy imposed constraints on the growth of non-government schools, 'particularly the Catholic system'. The breaking of the nexus meant 'that increases in government school costs will not necessarily and immediately be reflected in increases in funds for non-government schools.'[8]

## NEW SCHOOLS, REGISTRATION, AND GRANTS

* *'The Government has brought about a major improvement in the capital funding for non-government schools. It has allocated some $51 m. next year, and has allowed the Schools Commission to forward commit almost the same amount for the two years beyond 1984, to assist non-government school authorities in providing places for new students in developing areas, and to ensure that basic facilities are provided in existing non-government schools serving poor communities.' (8)*

Critique

These measures - including the continuation of the new places program, indexed against inflation - will prove beneficial. However, various aspects of the Guidelines are couched in a restrictive form: 'Schools will need to be able to demonstrate through the State registration process that they are able to offer adequate educational programs' (s. 37). Registration will 'no longer entail automatic eligibility for Commonwealth grants'.[9] 'They will also be required to show that they have reasonable prospects of long-term viability and, in the case of proposed operation in established areas, that there will not be a significant negative impact on existing government and non-government schools' (s. 37; also, *Report for 1984, 2.11*).

According to an editorial in *The Australian Financial Review* (6 July, 1984): 'The very notion of an "impact" statement on the establishment of new schools is an absurdity. The worse the public schools become as a result of the activities of the ATF and its affiliates, the more necessary new independent schools become, and the greater their adverse impact on public schools.'

Assuming that impact studies are necessary, it is nowhere mentioned in the Guidelines that consideration should be given to poor communities desiring a non-government school and that 'the need for consultation and, where possible, co-ordinated planning in developing areas' should include parallel impact studies for government schools - as suggested in the 'Anderson' report.[10] At the 1983 conference of the APC, Dr Tannock agreed that there was an onus on Government Departments to avoid saturating the community with unwanted government schools. However, neither the Commonwealth Government nor the Schools Commission can do anything about this, when and if it occurs; nor are their signs of a will to remonstrate with State Governments. Evidence of the need of non-government schools and of parents' wishes is to be found in the Commission's *Recommendations for 1983*: '72 of the NSW applications [143 for capital grants]...were rejected due to lack of funds, even though 10 of them...were given an A rating (top priority) in terms of both educational and financial needs' (2.9).

In November, 1983, a working party of The AEC produced a report: *Registration of Non-Government Schools*.[11] It is couched in vague terms, with warnings that could apply equally to government schools. There was stress on the rights of children rather than parents, and of the obligation of Governments to protect these rights (1.2.1; 1.2.2; 2.2.2; 2.2.3; 3.2.5; 3.5.4); currently, the latter means Labor Ministers, with no more than a peripheral interest in non-government school education. They have their own interpretation of 'positive programs and practices consistent with human rights legislation' (5.2.5). The curriculum should 'help pupils to consider the values of society and to develop a personal set of values' (3.1.1), but this might be conceived as approval for current social mores. 'Provisions relating to discrimination' (3.2) are dealt with in such general terms that they are of no value. It is difficult to see how truly unjust discrimination can be allowed to pass just because it is 'done in good faith in accordance with the doctrines of the particular religion or creed' (3.2.4). The working party wished to 'incorporate provisions concerning discrimination into procedures for registration' (3.2.5).

In this context, Mr Gunn, Education Minister for Queensland, commented: 'If a non-state school is not approved but continues to operate with the approval of parents who continue to send their children, the Minister's only alternative under the present [1981] Act, is to prosecute the parents. He can do nothing about the school itself.' [12]

The AEC noted that 'the educational quality of non-government schools should perhaps not be exclusively judged on the basis of conventional views of teaching practice and curriculum provisions in government schools ' (3.4.6.). It did not develop this point and the spirit of the report is better shown in the statement: 'Generally, the tendency across Australia seems to be one of lifting the standards which must be met before registration is granted and of adopting more stringent procedures' (6.1). The key issue is the validity of the criteria by which assessment is made; many 'experts' have had indifferent track records.

Senator Ryan expressed qualms about the proliferation of schools 'which do not seem to be appropriate for a tolerant democratic society'. She instanced the Hare Krishna schools. She appeared on a November, 1983 'Four Corners' program, saying that she was worried about 'cult' schools. [13] Comment in the 'Newsletter' (1984, no. 1) of the Parents' and Friends' Associations of Catholic Schools of the Northern Territory on schools in Alice Springs - the Aboriginal Yipirinya (registered after a three year battle) and a proposed Accelerated Christian Education School - is relevant: 'The Federation supports the rights of parents, but it does not deny the legitimate interests of the Government. Where you have a small school without much money, there is danger that the parents will not be able to pursue their rights. That throws a particular responsibility on the Government to be co-operative.' [14]

When registration/funding was debated, Senator Baume asked about procedures for 'adequate consultation' in building new schools and for assessing the 'significant adverse effect' of proposed schools. Senator Macklin, spokesman for the Democrats, considered that the former clause should apply to State schools also. Senator Ryan's only reply was that the interpretation of these clauses was a matter for State Planning and Finance Committees. [15] This was her standard answer to attempts to clarify legislation by amendment.

In the debate on the meaning of 'developing area', the Minister indicated that 'the ratio is usually about 1:4; say, four government primary schools to one Catholic school.' [16] If this, rather than parent wishes, is to be the basis of decision, then a Labor Government will quickly claim 'disruption' when other communities/denominations/groups seek consideration after the State has 'its' four schools built.

A Commission document makes an important statement: 'While promoting better planning and improved co-ordination in relation to the development of new non-government schools, the Government does not intend that such orderly planning for new schools should of itself deny communities the right to choose the type of educational provision they consider appropriate.'[17] Compare Mr Fordham: 'I think we are foolish if we try from Treasury Place or Nauru House to be making decisions which are best taken closer to the communities concerned.'[18] He intended his comment to apply to types of government school. His attitude to non-government schools is summed up in his 'at the moment you have this link between registration and funding... As far as I'm concerned it can't be maintained'.[19]

## A COMMUNITY STANDARD

* *'The Government has asked the Schools Commission to develop a "community standard" which can be used as a basis for funding policies for both government and non-government schools'.* (9)

### Critique

The Commission has estimated 'standard costs', 'baskets of services' and, from April, 1982, 'target recurrent resource standards' that give a guide to educational requirements. Much good could come from the determination of costs of what are now called different 'model' configurations appropriate in different States/localities, and in a variety of circumstances. Group 1 schools should be compared with equivalent government schools in the same State.

The studies have been conducted as an academic exercise - not clearly connected with 'outcomes' (cf. 4.47 in the February, 1984 'TRSS' study) or the capacity of Governments and of parents (in the non-government sector) to pay. They create 'rising expectations' and a minefield for independent schools faced by growing teacher militancy and insufficient funds to implement an 'appropriate model'.

The Commonwealth cannot set standards in State schools. 'Options', the Commission's 1984 Discussion Paper, does not provide any solution. A national government school cost would 'directly impinge on State's responsibilities for determining resource allocations (3.11.1)... A single national target standard could also be seen to be unnecessarily insensitive to the particular needs of individual schools or States' (3.11.2). These principles are not applied to the non-government sector where schools in high-cost States have been penalised by use of national averages. Finally the 'TRRS' study separates recurrent resources - involving class sizes and courses - from capital requirements, such as more classrooms, facilities and equipment. It does not, therefore, supply an adequate feasibility analysis.[20]

Senator Macklin stated in Senate debates that 'promises have been broken and broken decisively'.[21] Senator Baume quoted from Labor's policy statement: 'A period of time will be required to allow the Schools Commission to determine the community standard and to allow schools in the light of that determination to make their decision. Funding at present levels will be maintained during this period.'[22] This unambiguous commitment was not honoured in 1984.

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# 23

# *'Options' and the TRRS Study*

## INTRODUCTION

Previous chapters (11 and 22) have referred to two Commonwealth Schools Commission documents released in February, 1984:

*Options for Commonwealth Funding of General Recurrent Resources for Australian Schools: a discussion paper.*

*Target Recurrent Resource Standards Study: draft report*

This chapter analyses assumptions and conclusions of the drafts.

The Commission submitted *Funding Policies for Australian Schools* to the Minister on 12 April, 1984; the report represents a final consideration after consultation with interested groups (FP, Appendix A). Some of the recommendations - as applied to non-government schools - are dealt with in the context of the 'Options' critique, e.g., the assessment of schools' resources; the responsibilities of the funding 'partners'; agreements; accountability; new schools and places. The chapter closes with funding practices recommended to the Minister for the government and non-government sectors and with a summary of the minority dissenting reports of Joan Brown and Van Davy.

## UNDERLYING PRINCIPLES IN THE 'OPTIONS'

The Labor Party claimed that 'prescriptive Guidelines of the kind issued by the Fraser Government will not be relied on' and that it would 'maintain an independent Schools Commission'.[1] The Commission has taken pride in its being 'an independent statutory body'.[2] However, Chapter 11 has already suggested that, despite all the Labor rhetoric, the Commission walks a tight rope set up by the Party. Some might consider that the Commission's adherence to the Guidelines implied an uncritical acceptance of Labor principles. However, moderate members of the Commission deem it politic to survive to provide some moderating influence. In addition, Dr Tannock showed skill in the final report to the Minister, where he increased recurrent funding for both the government sector and very low resource non-government schools. He also provided a partial solution, attractive to Mr Hawke, for electoral problems generated by previous treatment of schools / parents on the 'hit-list'.

'In the context of the Government's objectives as expressed in the Guidelines' (2.5), the Commission wished to develop a 'rationale for Commonwealth general recurrent programs...' (2.6). Despite the extensive list of principles and objectives set out - many of them conflicting - there was little or no discussion of their relative merits or relationships. The Commission ignored its obligation to have regard to 'incentives which would 'stimulate and encourage public and private interest in, and support for, improvements in primary and secondary education and in schools and school systems'.[3]

### Is Commonwealth funding supplementary?

(2.6.1): 'Commonwealth general recurrent funding would be seen as supplementary' to the financial role played by the other funding partners. Maintenance of State and private effort would presumably be an important aspect...'

* It is invalid to compare State Governments with parents with children in non-government schools. The State Government either has the resources or creates them by one of two methods: extra taxation or deficit budgeting and loans involving interest and capital repayments financed by subsequent heavier taxation. The argument is always about maintenance of education expenditure in real terms or, more often, with a degree of betterment. With many children at non-government schools, particularly those from poor families, the question is rather what economies and extra effort will be needed. In the same section, the Commission admits that 'any school fees represent a barrier to access'.

### Recurrent and special programs

(2.6.2): The Commission raised 'questions about the nexus between Commonwealth general resources and special purpose programs'.

* Recurrent grants are the major source of funding for the basic educational programs of most schools. It is only when these basic needs are funded adequately that special programs will be fully effective.

### Equal rights

(2.6.4): 'Support for the equal rights of all Australian children to an adequate level of schooling resources. Students should enjoy this entitlement in their own right, and it should not be contingent upon their parents' tax contributions.'

* The principle is sound and, indeed, an argument for full funding of all children in all schools. In addition, the concept should not be used as a bludgeon against those above 'the adequate level' - whether they be government schools with access to expensive programs in dance, art or music or non-government schools of high resource because of the importance the parents attach to the education offered.

### Relative needs: parents and schools

(2.6.5): 'Provision of general recurrent resources according to the relative needs of schools and students, such that no Australian student would be deprived of high quality schooling because of the relative lack of financial resources available to their parents or school communities.' Needs are currently assessed by the Schools Recurrent Resource Index (SRRI). The Commission refers 'to a number of problems...concerning its operation' (4.17), noting that 'neither SRRI nor income testing procedures are sufficient to meet the Government's guidelines in relation to the development of a more comprehensive approach to the assessment of schools' needs' (4.19).

* The significant 'need' is the parents' reasonable choice of school and the provision of support for each child, so that all parents may exercise this right. The Parents' and Friends' Federation, Queensland, has suggested that schools in all categories should be encouraged to enrol students disadvantaged by their socio-economic status and that the Commonwealth should provide financial assistance. Government assistance paid to the school would remove the stigma which might embarass some people. The status of 'maintained' students should be strictly confidential to the Commonwealth, school administrators, and the student's parents. There are already 'maintained' students in non-government schools, but the 'maintenance' is at the expense of other parents who have to pay more.

### Schools' needs assessment

FP (3.25 to 3.34): 'The Commonwealth should adopt in principle one of three assessment measures for determining the relative needs of non-government schools and systems. In order of preference, these are: an expenditure/income formula; an income measure; SRRI supplemented with Schools Income Assessment' (10, p. 70). The Commission preferred to incorporate 'the unspent portion of a school's income in the final assessment of the expenditure index on the grounds that the school might have applied this to recurrent resource improvements' (3.26).

* While the preferred option allows 'for a reasonable proportion of school income to be applied to non-recurrent or non-tuition purposes' (3.26), it nowhere mentions capital for building needs on the same or alternative campus for schools with large numbers of parents seeking to enrol their children. Until this issue is resolved equitably, the whole exercise will present problems. 'Income measure' involves assessment of 'a school's existing capacity to provide recurrent resources' (3.31), i.e., means-testing! The third option is that used at present, viz., determination of SRRI, followed by 'a review' of a school's 'total income' (3.32). The combination of SRRI with income-testing has been discussed in Chapter 14; the first option, cited above, is identical in principle, but attempts to create a 'formula' for 'expenditure/income'.

### High quality public systems

(2.6.8): 'The Commission acknowledges the need for high quality, fully funded public school systems.' (Cf. LP, 10.2.)

* A strong and diversified government school sector contributes to the choices available to parents. However, Governments have a responsibility to support the education of all children equitably.

### Right and need

(2.6.9.): These have been expressed by the Government as 'the right of parents to exercise a choice in schooling, but that the criterion of need should determine the extent to which choice would be subsidised...'

* S. 2.6.9 undermines the concept of 'right' and of 'entitlement' to share in grants. No mention is made of the educational and funding 'needs' of children in individual families.

## GENERAL RECURRENT RESOURCES

### Differences in resources

(4.5): 'The great majority of non-government schools operates at recurrent resource standards considerably below, those on average, in the government sector. Similarly, a smaller number of non-government schools appears to have recurrent resources considerably above average government school standards... The extent to which a new funding scheme can at the same time improve recurrent resource levels in low resource non-government schools and reduce disparities in resources available to schools is a major question...' (Cf. LP, 10.3, 10.4.)

* One can only support a scheme which provides adequate resources in all schools - subject to equitable treatment for all parents.

### Comparison of resources

(4.5): Individual non-government schools are compared with 'average' government schools.

* This practice is inconsistent with Labor Federal policy which states: 'The Schools Commission will establish a community standard for school resources based on the level of resources available in comparable government schools' (LP, s. 7). In addition, (4.5) claims that government schools above 'average' are likely to be serving relatively isolated or disadvantaged communities.

### Aggregation and the 'system' schools

(4.33): 'Under the "aggregation" proposal, all non-government schools in Australia would attract grants on the basis of their individually assessed needs and would provide a ready answer to the charge that is sometimes made that, because of the "averaging" principle, high-resourced individual systemic schools were able to attract maximum needs grants from the Commonwealth...the "aggregation" proposal would result in reduced funds for systemic authorities.'

* The 'system' structure - for non-government, initially Catholic schools - has involved delegation to 'authorities' subject to accountability to the Commission. The essence of the idea has been the support of low-fee schools which cater for low-income parents at the expense of schools which can call on more 'private' support; the variation in the level of 'contributed services' from school to school has also demanded financial adjustments. Labor spokespersons have constantly stressed that Catholic systems - which cannot provide recognised 'standards' of resources at present - will get 'more'. The Commission's final recommendation to the Minister was for 'aggregation', which it did not expect 'should significantly advantage or disadvantage systems' (FP, 3.37). Yet, Report for the Triennium 1982-84 ( 12.49), had predicted a variation in reduction in grant to Catholic systems of $3.819 m. because of aggregation!

State schools are also funded through systems. Why are they not treated individually, at least to the point that the public can examine and compare expenditures?

Recurrent support for boarders

(4.20.4v): 'The Commission has so far taken the view that specific recurrent support for boarding schools should not be provided through the general recurrent program but that those students who are unable to attend local schools should continue to be eligible for individual remote area allowances from the Commonwealth and the States.'

* There are a number of other factors which necessitate boarding school facilities: itinerant parents, service personnel, country children needing an education of a certain character. This section of a non-government school has often had to draw on the fees of day-pupils in order to remain viable. The Commission proposed that 'Commonwealth and State governments negotiate agreements covering the additional needs' of boarding children (FP, 4.2). It is relevant to note a request (July, 1984) of the NSW Parents' and Citizens' Association for the provision of government boarding schools, especially for children in isolated areas.

Mrs Judith Hancock has pointed out that boarding schools 'must be institutions that accept responsibility for the total welfare of students and should not be considered merely as hostels'. [4]

Partners?

(4.9): 'The reality of resource agreements...,including possibilities for maintaining or increasing effort, will also determine the extent to which a funding scheme can in fact be co-ordinated to achieve stated objectives. Without such agreements, the present apparent irregularitites and inconsistencies in the pattern of non-government school finance,...will continue.' (Cf. LP, 10.5, 12.5, 12.6.)

(FP, 3.43, 3.45): 'The fundamental objective...is...to move towards the Community Standard. This objective will only be realised if the other partners accept responsibilities...the Commission proposes that at least the maintenance in real terms of private cash recurrent expenditure be a general condition for Commonwealth general recurrent funding. Schools and systems should also be asked to justify any inability to offset further declines in the value of contributed services'.

* It is nonsense to talk of parents (or the schools which they have to support) as being 'partners', of equal standing with Governments. The proposition that the non-government school parents/communities must put in certain resources as a pre-condition for the entitlement of their children to receive government grants is unacceptable. The demand seems to be directed to low-resource schools. It is inconsistent, because it recognises needs, i.e., an inability to contribute, and then suggests increased effort! It fails to mention the standing of these schools, which have made good and economical use of Government grants. Low-fee schools have a fine record of providing 'access', and the Commission does not wish to jeopardise enrolment policies (4.26; cf. FP, 3.44). The evidence suggests that Catholic schools cannot replace lost 'contributed services' with cash inputs. Religious personnel have enabled Catholic schools to maintain high outcomes with low resources for many years, and Governments have been saved a heavy financial burden; the time has come for them 'to pick up the tab'.

Improvement of effort

(4.34; cf. 4.26): 'A new funding scheme might incorporate certain conditions for maintenance or improvement of private effort so as to achieve desirable levels of recurrent resources.' (Cf. LP, s. 12.7.)

* Within eight paragraphs, the Commission moved from 'maintenance' to 'improvement' of effort. Those who are least able to achieve either target are the lower income groups in society, who are penalised in their right to exercise choice without economic discrimination.

Financial capacity of parents

(4.17; 4.20): 'The Commission seeks a mechanism for establishing 'the financial capacity of school communities to provide resources'. While disclaiming any intention 'to obtain data on the income levels of individual parents' (4.20.1), the Commission suggests assessment of 'the financial potential of a school's community to provide particular levels of resources based on income...' (4.20.3; cf. LP, s. 12.8.)

* Intrusions into the privacy and use of 'disposable income' of non-government school parents seem limitless. No such measures are considered for government school parents.

## ACCOUNTABILITY OF NON-GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS

(4.42): 'The Guidelines make it apparent that some aspects of the present accountability arrangements in respect of Commonwealth general recurrent grants to non-government schools were regarded as being unsatisfactory.' The Commission stated that it was 'satisfied that in most respects the present provisions for financial accountability for the non-government general recurrent program are adequate'. Despite this acknowledgment, the Commission considered 'these financial accountability requirements could be extended' (4.34; cf. LP, 10.5). In addition, it claimed: 'It is in relation to the accountability arrangements for non-financial objectives that the Commission has most concern... School and system authorities could also be required to provide more detailed information...on the educational programs to which general recurrent funds are directed...' (4.43)

* Anyone who has studied Commission questionnaires would be intrigued at the ingenuity involved in 'extending enquiry'.[5] FP, 3.47 supplies details, which may be demanded on an annual basis. There is no suggestion that such coverage is to be supplied by the States for government schools, and it is a pious wish to hope for accounting on an annual basis or for the same scrutiny by the Commission (FP, 2.29 and s.8, pp. 69-70). G. Bartels, the Public Affairs director for AISNSW, has stated: 'If non-government schools are to be held individually accountable for the matters proposed by the Commission, so should government schools be held individually accountable - in the same matters, in the same manner and to the same degree.[6] As 'for non-financial objectives', if the Commission meant curriculum, it might have used the word. Is it a Commonwealth responsibility (cf. LP: 2.2)? [7]

A further issue is the confidentiality of information. There is concern that material of a sensitive nature could be 'leaked' or fall into the hands of those who will distort it for their own purposes. Fr T. Doyle, the director of CEOV, has stated that the Commonwealth Attorney General's Department has given certain re-assurances. However, there is still uncertainty as to the application of the Freedom of Information Act 1982 and the obligations of members of the Schools Commission either during or after their term as commissioners. [8]

## NEW NON-GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS

(4.7): 'All Governments currently provide recurrent funds to non-government schools which have met the requirements of State registration...new non-government schools must also satisfy the tests of financial viability, adequate consultation with State education authorities and impact on existing schools in established areas before being eligible for Commonwealth grants' (Cf. LP, 12.12 to 12.14).

(FP, 24(i), p. 73): 'New schools, as a condition for Commonwealth recurrent funding, should meet enrolment guidelines such as those set out in the report of the Australian Education Council on the Registration of Non-government schools.'

* Governments have the right to establish appropriate conditions for schooling. However, they also have the duty of respecting parents, of initiating impartial consultation before schools are built, and of avoiding appeals to lack of 'financial viability' as an excuse for their own injustice. The Commission acknowledged the requirement for 'consultation between sectors on the relative need for government and non-government schools in developing areas' (4.44; cf. FP, 3.53). A welcome, but little known, part of the Federal Labor platform, described in Chapter 15, stated: 'Where new non-government school places are to be provided in accordance with the educational planning for a developing area, Labor will advance the provision of funds to ensure that new non-government schools places are provided when they are required by their prospective students rather than some years later as at present' (LP, 12.13.) However, at a time when there is an increasing demand for non-government schools, the overall purpose of the exercise seems to be to restrict expansion of the sector. For example, when 'studies of the impact of proposed new schools are conducted, the bodies responsible for the studies [are to] provide opportunities for members of the public to make submissions...' (FP, 3.55). The context and the reading of recommendation 24(ii) make it quite clear that the reference is to 'new non-government schools' affecting 'existing government and non-government schools'. [9]

### In 'systems'

(4.32): 'It has sometimes been alleged that system authorities are able to facilitate the growth of new non-government schools within their systems, but that in doing so the increased costs of establishing such schools are met at the expense of resource improvements in existing systemic schools which are receiving needs based funding...'

* This allegation has been countered by authorities as far apart as the NCEC and Marginson of the ATF; see ref 32, Chapter 21. It is relevant to quote the CECV response (15 September, 1983) to a July report of the State Board of Education - to be discussed in Chapter 27:

> The State Board appears to lay at the feet of non-government school authorities all educational planning faults in this State ... It must be stated quite clearly that the serious over-provision of educational facilities that presently exists in some parts of Victoria arises from four sources: provision of government school facilities on the basis of political lobby and favour rather than on the basis of objective planning; the introduction by the Victorian Education Department of flexible school design was too late; competition between the divisions of the Department that existed until 1983, particularly between the Secondary Division and the Technical Division; an apparent lack of co-ordination across the State with provision of TAFE facilities and provision of secondary and technical school facilities. For the State Board to impute to the non-government sector any major contribution to over-provision of educational facilities is a gross distortion and quite unacceptable... Further the CECV has advised the Director General by letter year by year of definite plans for new schools...

## VOUCHERS: AN OPTION OUTSIDE GOVERNMENT POLICY

(4.12.1): 'Problems with the voucher mechanism include administrative costs, assessment criteria for differentiating between individuals, Commonwealth - State financial arrangements, likely uneconomic use of resources and, especially in the case of "full" vouchers, overall cost.'

* I have already suggested in Chapters 16 and 22 that the present bureaucracies, including their representatives on the Schools Commission, are unwilling to pursue theoretical or pilot studies of vouchers. In the words of an editorial in *The Australian*: 'The general response from the Public Service has been that, while theoretically interesting, it would be an administrative nightmare... innovation should not be ignored because it makes life hard for bureaucrats...' [10]

To address myself briefly to objections: a form of voucher scheme is already in use in Australia; administrative procedures are in place and vouchers need not be 'full' cost; per pupil recurrent grants could be moved progressively from present levels; actuaries could throw light on the possibilities of the taxation system doing justice to individuals of different means. Given something to work on, the Commonwealth and States should, through the AEC, be able to come to some rational decision. As for the Commission's reference to 'uneconomic use of resources', the suggestion is no more than supposition.

## OPTIONS WITHIN GOVERNMENT POLICY

### MAINTAINED SCHOOLS

(4.35; 4.38): The "maintained" schools concept is not unlike proposals for "supported" schools developed in *Report for the Triennium 1976-78*. 'The Commission assumes that "maintained" schools would be subject to a greater range of conditions than would be the case for "assisted" schools.'

* Why impose extra conditions on parents/schools for the non-government school poor? The proposal is just another aspect of 'integration' policies. The proper place for these schools is in the 'assisted' category. Increased levels of assistance should come through the concept of 'maintained' students rather than 'maintained' schools. All government school students, irrespective of their parents' capacity to pay, are in the 'maintained' category.

* Aboriginal schools, operated within non-government systems or by Aboriginal communities as independent schools, are of low private resource. The Commission's recommendation to the Minister was that the conditions associated with support 'should be negotiated with the States and the communities involved...' (FP, 5.2).

### SELF-SUPPORTING SCHOOLS

(4.41): ' "Self-supporting" schools would not receive funds from Commonwealth or State sources and would not be responsible for the provision of information about their operation, except for that required to satisfy State registration criteria.'

* It is doubtful if this proposal is within the Government's Guidelines/policies, and it would be interesting to know the commissioner(s) who had 'the bright idea'. One can only say that all children are entitled to a fair level of funding for basic education. However, any school has the right to become voluntarily self-supporting provided it has the support of all parents. If some parents disagree, and are adversely affected, such action would be a violation of their rights.

### ASSISTED SCHOOLS

(4.11): Assisted schools 'might receive varying levels of Commonwealth and State financial assistance as a complement to the contributions of school communities'. The option provided some funding for each in what might be 12 categories.

* The option did not include recognition of a basic grant, as a right, for every child attending a non-government school. 'Relative needs' were based on a formula (a percentage of 'TRRS' from private sources) which is unacceptable as a measure of a child's entitlement and/or needs.

## TARGET RECURRENT RESOURCE STANDARDS STUDY

According to the Commission, 'an approach based on the Target Recurrent Resource Standards could produce recommendations for a basic or "core" target standard or resource configuration, which ought to be available to all schools' ('Options', 3.11.2). 'Additional resources may be required by schools and students with particular characteristics' (TRRSS, 9.5) and to produce 'greater equality of educational opportunity' (TRRSS, 11.1)

The Commission summarised the 'combination of basic principles and schooling objectives' that provide the basis for developing appropriate resource standards for Australian schools in the 1980s (TRRSS, 3.18). However, it pointed out that 'the special educational needs which some students and schools have and the configurations and levels of resources which would equalise their educational opportunities and outcomes is difficult to determine' (TRRSS, 10.18). These include the quality of teaching, the dedication of teachers, parental involvement, the standards set in the school environment and, above all, pupil motivation and acceptance of these standards. There have been few, if any, in-depth studies which might partly explain the relation of these criteria to, happy relationships, academic performance and high retention rates in low-resource schools. Use of TRRS alone could lead to the impression that money inputs alone can produce desirable schooling outcomes.

The estimate of a 'resource level' demands attention to teacher numbers, administrative support, other recurrent requirements and, what is often neglected, an appropriate capital infra-structure. Any significant change in class sizes, additional courses, or provision of special amenities, automatically involves a school in additional expenditure for extensions - more classrooms, buildings and equipment. It does not seem possible to develop a combined recurrent/capital general resource standard (cf. 'Options' 4.16.12), as there is too much variation, from school to school, in respective needs.

The TRRS concept allows for agreement on interim targets that reflect a rate of resource usage growth that has community acceptance and can be borne by the economy. Application to the non-government sector is discriminatory unless the Commonwealth has a firm agreement with the States that, within the agreed time frame, such interim targets are not to be exceeded by government schools.

However, past experience would suggest that the States will resist the controls on their own expenditure implied in the TRRS concept and that they will not accept the increased accountability requirements sought by 'Options' 3.13-14. Up to now, the States have never shown any eagerness to provide the kind of information which would be required; cf. 'Options' 4.16.2. If agreement about TRRS cannot be met, then Average Government School Costs per primary/secondary pupil should be retained as the standard.

The Commission finally recommended a 'basic Community Standard for the period 1985-88' of $2,195 per primary student and $3,240 per secondary student' (FP, Appendices C and D). In view of the 'comprehensive obligations' of public school systems, their interim funding standards were set, 5% higher, at $2,305 and $3,402 respectively (FP, p. 67).

The final report on this topic was released as *Commonwealth Standards for Australian Schools.*

## REPORT TO THE MINISTER

### GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS

Three options were put forward in *Funding Policies for Australian Schools*; each was designed to produce an increase of 10% per annum.

1. Progressive increases in Commonwealth general recurrent grants to 10% of the total sum of Commonwealth and State general recurrent expenditure on government schools.

2. Progressive increases in Commonwealth general recurrent grants linked to the Community Standard.

3. Increases in total Commonwealth general recurrent funds at the rate of 10 per cent per annum. (FP, 2.13 to 2.22)

Resource agreements were to have regard to the fact that Commonwealth policies are based on 'need', and accountability arrangements were specified (FP, 2.23 to 2.29).

When the State Ministers of Education met on 27 April, 1984, they agreed in principle to negotiate, with the Commonwealth, funding agreements specifying educational aims for government schools. Senator Ryan commented: 'We will now know where we are going in improvements in schools, and it won't just be a shot in the dark, throwing some money away hoping that something will improve.' Mr Powell of Queensland said that his State could not enter into serious negotiations until he knew the Federal proposals.[11]

The Commission's report on 'Standards' admitted that it considered 'educationally desirable recurrent resources such as classroom teachers, specialist staff and ancillary staff' and not 'the confines of a particular funding policy or strategy'. Increases in recurrent expenditure involve capital costs to provide facilities for smaller classes, etc.[12]

NON-GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS

The Commission considered that 'the Commonwealth should categorise schools according to one of two options, the order of preference being:

1. Categories related to the Community Standard and, in the lower categories, with progressive increases over the years.

2. Categories related to Government School Standard Cost.

Significant features of the policy were that schools with 88%+ 'of the Standard from private sources by 1988' are in Category 1 for all classifications; see 3.41. As this category, with its 15% funding for 1984, is clearly identified with 'hit-list' schools, lowering the cut-off point from 95% to 88% was a virtual recommendation for extension of the Commonwealth list.

When using Government School Standard Cost, the percentage grant for some categories (4, 5, 8, 9) decreases over the years, the percentage grant for others (6, 7, 10, 11, 12) increases. When using the Community Standard and the Commission's classification, movement of the level of private input from 30% to 31% with movement from Category 8 to 7 would entail a loss of $171 in Commonwealth funding for both primary and secondary pupils in 1985. The grant to a Category 8 student in current terms would increase by only $45 from 1984 to 1988.

## THE USE OF PERCENTAGE CHANGE TO ASSESS 'BETTERMENT'

'Betterment' is the in-word to suggest an increase in funding. Periodically throughout this monograph, I have objected to the comparison of funding increases by comparison of percentage change. This is only possible when the increases are from an equal base.

Let us consider Table 1.2 of 'Funding Policies'. State recurrent expenditure on Australian government schools rose by 24.9% or $905.1 m. in real terms from 1975/76 to 1981/82. For non-government schools, the increases were 62.3% or $105.7 m. Even allowing for the 76.2% of children in government schools in 1982 (Table 3.5), the funding rises in money terms are in a ratio of approximately 9 to 1, the weighting being towards the government sector.

It may be claimed that the Commission has never interpreted figures in this way. However, unqualified and uncritical publication of percentage changes, as in the tables of Appendix B, *Report for 1980*, has provided a field day for lobbyists, and the media, including economists - such as Kenneth Davidson and Maximilian Walsh - who should know better. Davidson's article, 'Private schools, public money' in *The Age*, 24 June, 1982, gave percentage increases only! 13

## RELATIVE FUNDING DURING THE FRASER PERIOD

With this principle in mind, it is relevant to consider *Australian School Statistics*, January, 1984. Percentages were not cited in the body of the table I employ, 5.12, 'Public sector per pupil expenditure (December, 1982 prices) on schools in the States, 1974-75 to 1981-82'; workings are mine. From 1975-76 to 1980-81, total recurrent expenditure on government schools increased in real terms by 14%. There was no change in Commonwealth funding and a 20% increase in State funding; the total increase in money terms was $280. Non-government school pupils received total increases, in real terms, of 27%; the total increase in money terms was $220. This analysis shows two things: the danger in use of percentages and the real advantage to the government school pupil of $60. It also demonstrates the inaccuracy of the statement of Davy to the June, 1984 NCIS conference: 'The gap between the poor schools and average Government school costs became bigger in spite of Federal and State increases to private schools that were greatly in excess of the additional resources provided to Government schools.' 14

## THE MINORITY REPORTS

### Joan Brown

Mrs Brown's critique commenced with the Commission's alleged departure from its 'primary obligation' to government schools. She, in my opinion correctly, rejected the use of 'Community Standard' for funding: 'The only acceptable standard which should be used to determine the level of general recurrent resources for non-government schools must be the standard costs of government schools, for this is the only realistic measure of what the community is presently prepared to spend on schooling.' Her statement, 'General recurrent funds should not be provided for new schools or for new places in existing schools', is a radical rejection of parents' rights.

Van Davy

According to Davy, 'the Commission was bound to respond to the Minister's direction to recommend a Community Standard. But it was open to the Commission to advise the Minister of the consequences of its recommendations. The Commission has not done so and thus leaves the Government blinkered.'

He claimed that 'there is simply no acknowledgment of the resource crisis faced by many government schools', yet considered that the Commission's 'medium term standard resource configuration would, if accepted by the government, actually worsen important educational conditions in many government schools', particularly in the secondary sector of Tasmania, Victoria and South Australia.

Davy stated correctly that 'policy towards one sector cannot be considered or made without reference to the effects on the other sector', and some would say that this was recognised in the majority report. He noted that 'private schools are 'more competitive, and the proportion of enrolments in government schools has fallen'. In his judgment, 'the role of government schools has been down graded', but one might ask why there is increasing demand for places in parts of the non-government sector that are of lower resource. He claimed that the government system alone provides 'social and cultural unity', 'genuinely educational (rather than private and religious) choices', but is 'under ideological and political attack'.

For Davy, 'Australia's taxation system is designed to ensure that sufficient funds are available for Governments to provide essential services for the common good'. These services include transport and schools. Van Davy, Joan Kirner (Chapter 5), and the Anderson Committee reporting on Radford College (Chapter 28) seem to think that 'the common good' can be realised in the government school only. Nowhere do they consider the nature of 'the good', which must ultimately depend on understanding of the essence of the human person. If they get that wrong, nothing else will fall into place. Admittedly, they are so sure of their position that they wish a monopoly, well protected by discriminatory economic measures applied in the long-term to the poor as well as the rich.

Davy's question 'Who "owns" the taxation dollar?' is a fair one, as is his plea for serious examination of issues such as 'freedom of choice' and 'need'. Van Davy has claimed, not incorrectly, that Commonwealth and State support for the non-government school sector could swell to $1 billion by 1988.[15] If Davy's hope of 'immediate abolition of State Aid' came to pass with children in non-government schools attending government schools, it would cost the taxpayer $852 m. extra each year.[16]

According to Davy, the responsibility for the gap between private and government schools 'lies with private school authorities, as they have decreased private cash expenditure per student and have allowed big uncompensated declines in contributed services'.[17]

CECNSW has issued a statement on these claims.[18] First, Table 5.6 of *Australian School Statistics* shows that Catholic schools have increased their private source expenditure in current price terms from 1976 to 1981 by 11.9% in primary schools and by 32.1% in secondary schools. With respect to 'contributed services', they have fallen, but the decrease is understandable when the causes are examined. The reduction is due to the ageing or withdrawal of religious and the shortage of vocations; teaching congregations, as such, have not had policies of diversion from educational to non-educational work.[19] Secondly, in 1976 many lay teachers were young and on salaries lower than the Australian average, so that they were estimated as contributing a 'service'. This factor has declined.

## RESPONSE OF VICCSO

VICCSO was 'strongly opposed to any funding of non-government schools while there are unmet needs in government schools'.[20]

The executive of VICCSO supported the stand of Mrs Joan Brown and considered that it was 'vital to recognise [that] the acceptance of the "entitlement to resources" provision destroys the "primary obligation" principle... The prospect we now face is that support for non-government schools is to become a matter of right, rather than a matter of humane assistance.' Other comments extended and interpreted certain principles. 1973 targets for State schools were stated to be minimum acceptable resource levels, not ideal standards; government schools were now burdened with new responsibilities due to social change and greatly in need of increased support; retention rates, at the high cost end of schooling, had risen in disadvantaged/high unemployment areas.[21]

## RESPONSE OF THE AUSTRALIAN PARENTS' COUNCIL

The APC responded to the Majority report of the Schools Commission on 17 April:

> While it is the aim of the scheme that students in all non-government schools will receive a grant, an examination of the 12-category scheme linking grants to recurrent school costs shows that some schools will be receiving effective decreases over four years. Even for schools In the present level 3 Group some grants will be reduced in percentage terms over four years.
>
> The potential for controls and intrusion into the legitimate privacy of non-government schools is contained in new proposals for accountability and agreements concerning staffing, enrolment and fee setting policies, as well as ownership, governance, objectives and private income, which are now to be subject to the Commission's scrutiny, and could provide information necessary for government control in the future.

> The Option which the Australian Parents' Council and the non-government sector in general support is the provision of a realistic basic grant, as a right, for all children attending non-government schools, with additional funds for special needs; these grants to be linked to the cost of educating children in government schools. This Option is not accepted in the document.[22]

I will refer to the the last paragraph only as most people will consider that, when 'Assisted Schools' appear to satisfy these conditions, the comment is a quibble. As pointed out in Chapter 6, the executive of the APC has been acute in detecting flaws of argument. First, the 'Assisted Schools' scheme does not admit the right of either child or parent to funding. Secondly, the APC has always been concerned at any scheme which relies on funding determined by school 'resources' alone; it wishes consideration of what the Karmel Interim Committee rejected: 'the plight of parents'. Thirdly, the APC has (honorary) analysts who have the competence to interpret Budgets and Education Department Annual Reports in terms of expenditure per pupil. The Commission's 'Community Standard' is not paralleled in the government school sector in an easily identifiable way. In addition, there are vast differences in the overall and detailed picture presented by different States and Territories. The Northern Territory is unique, but it is harder to justify the high average cost, exceeding that of any State, of government schooling in Canberra and in the Australian Capital Territories.

The APC met with Senator Susan Ryan in May and with the Prime Minister, Mr Hawke, in June. The Council stressed the necessity for security and stability in the non-government sector by: explicit acknowledgment of an equitable minimum basic grant as a right and entitlement; a 'needs' component; a nexus with 'government school costs' in each State; a 4-year funding program which would provide incentives and exclude lower re-classification because of improvement in resources through the efforts of a school community.[23]

## REFERENCES

1. Federal Labor Party. Labor's Education Program: A policy summary, s. 3.1 (henceforth, LP in this chapter; cf. Chapter 15); and ALP Bi-annual Policy Conference, Canberra, July, 1982 - 'Schooling Policy Resolutions'.

2. CSC TRRS Study Discussion Paper no. 3.

3. CSC Act (1973); 13.4f; the clause is cited in FP, p. 87.

4. Hancock, Judith. 'Boarding or not Boarding - The economic point of view'. Fifth National NCIS Conference, June, 1984.

5. See The Catholic Weekly. 'Catholic school funding is disputed', 16 May, 1984, where a statement of the CECNSW summarises the extensive detail supplied by non-government schools to the CSC.

6. Scarrabelotti, G. 'Schools report means much less autonomy for private schools', The Catholic Weekly, 9 May, 1984.

7. Cf. Helen Trinca. 'Schools Commission report is one-sided', The Australian, 27 April, 1984.

8. News Weekly. '...enemies get...information', 30 May, 1984.

9. See The VTU Journal. 'Is your school feeling the squeeze', August, 1984, for a government school view.

On the same day (14 August, 1984) that Senator Ryan released *Guidelines for 1985-88*, she formed a CSC panel on 'New Non-Government Schools'; pp. 264-265. A Preliminary Draft Report ('Planning and Funding Policies for New Non-Government Schools') was discussed at the 49th AEC meeting, 24 January, 1985. The panel referred to the necessity for 'planned educational provision' (s. 53, 83). While the practical problems in growing, stable and declining areas were considered - as required by the terms of reference, the study made certain additional assumptions. There was reference to 'enrolment balance' (s. 10), 'traditional pattern of school enrolments' (s. 21), and 'an agreed balance of government and non-government school enrolments' (s. 22). It cited the Interim Committee's statement (7.14) that it would be reasonable to make funds available to enable the non-government sector to maintain its share of school enrolments at the level existing in 1972; cf. my p. 35. The panel appealed to a table of enrolments (1965-83) to give its idea of 'balanced development' (s.83). 'The view that parents have a right to public funds to set up the non-government school of their choice' was noted, but considered to be 'a source of public controversy' (s. 10) This neglect of parent wishes, and appeal to past practice over which they had no control, was reinforced by statements that 'government schools have a unique legal obligation' (s. 20) and that 'the responsibility for planning new government schools rests entirely with the States' (s. 23).

10. The Australian. Editorial. 1-2 December, 1979.

11. Peterson, Ellen. 'Education ministers agree "in principle" on funding', The Australian, 28-29 April, 1984.

12. Cf. R. Farmer. 'Commission's plan for more expenditure', The Bulletin, 8 May, 1984.

13. Margaret Gartland of the VPC responded with personal letters (23/24 July, 1982) to Davidson and C.R.Macdonald, the managing director of The Age. When no acknowledgment was received, the material was released, and Macdonald was advised on 30 September, 1982; a letter dated 7 October from Creighton Burns indicated that the correspondence had been given to Davidson. Mrs Gartland stated that Davidson neglected the contribution of the States, and was wrong in stating that fees in non-government schools had been reduced between 1974 and 1979. She claimed: 'Mr Davidson shows little knowledge of the terms and reports of the CSC. He confuses "education spending" with "recurrent expenditure" and "fees" with "private input".' He 'manipulated' the CSC 'source' so as to make it 'unrecognisable'. See CPD, 21 October, 1982, pp. 2356-2357, where Mr Bourchier, member for Bendigo, summarises the Gartland paper.

M. Walsh, 'Moderate approach to school funding', The Age, 19 April, 1984, compared percentage increases - during the Fraser years - to school pupils in Groups 1 and 3. He did not refer to the erosion of grants to high resource schools during the Whitlam years and the low base from which growth took place. Walsh claimed that Ryan was under pressure from the ACT Labor Branch and her feminist friends to 'perform' and that her response - the early announcement of the 41 'hit-list' schools - was against the advice of certain members of the Schools Commission. They did not consider that the available data would ensure that 'the list was a fair one'.

See, also, K. Davidson, 'Hidden asset of private schools', The Age, 26 April, 1984; and letters to The Age from P.R. Bell, 30 April; N. (C.J.) Dewan, 1 May; Suzanne Bell, 2 May, 1984.

14. Davy, Van. Paper given to Fifth NCIS conference, June, 1984.

15. Trinca, Helen. 'Van Davy faces a watershed in public school funds fight', The Australian, 28-29 April, 1984.

16. This estimate is based on public sector expenditure in the States of Australia 1981-82 (est. December, 1983 prices and enrolments for 1983). Difference between government ($2,337) and non-government ($1,186) schools expenditure per pupil = Savings to taxpayer of $1,151. With 740,000 children in non-government schools, total savings = 740,000 x $1,151 or $851,740,000. (See APC Review 1-1984 for this treatment of figures supplied by the Federal Department of Finance, February, 1984.)

17. See, also, D. Tonkin, vice president South Australian Institute of Teachers, letter to unions dated 1 May, 1984, where he alleged: 'Contributed services in Catholic schools have been deliberately reduced and deployed outside schools and replaced by lay teachers who attract funding.'

18. The Catholic Weekly. 'The funding of Catholic schools has decreased', 30 May, 1984.

19. For evidence giving some support to the alternative view, see The Catholic Weekly, 'Religious in parish ministry', 6 June, 1984 and Nicholas Kerr, 'Roll of religious parish workers in focus', The Advocate, 7 June, 1984.

20. School Bell. 'Funding points put to Commission', 38, no. 4, May, 1984.

21. School Bell. 'Opposition to funding policies for Australian schools', 38, no. 6, July, 1984.

22. Australian Parents' Council. 'Hidden traps for non-government schools', Press Release, 17 April, 1984.

23. APC Review. 'APC submission to the Federal Government', X, no. 2, 1984. See, also, 'Notice to executive and affiliates', 20/1984, 18 May, 1984, for dialogue/responses during the meeting with Senator Ryan.

## RESPONSE OF THE LABOR CAUCUS

Chapter 23 considered various responses to the Commonwealth Schools Commission's *Funding Policies for Australian Schools* (April, 1984). The Governments directives as to the date of release were obviously directed to the forthcoming ALP national conference in July.

Members of the Labor Caucus sub-committee were concerned that the Government implement its policy of 'primary obligation' to State schools. They were critical of support to non-government schools on the basis of the Commission's 'community standard'.[1]

Senator Ryan presented the report of the Education and Youth Affairs Platform Committee to the conference. It considered 'the relationship of education to employment, economic growth, social harmony and, most fundamentally, equity'... participation 'not limited to privileged groups and individuals'... and 'outcomes of education as well as inputs'.[2] The conference voted that the Government should 'continue to phase out all funding support for the most wealthy private schools which operate above the resource levels of comparable government schools, and redirect those funds to government and non-government schools on the basis of need'.[3]

A passage from the speech is not consistent with the tenor of the conference resolution and anticipates the Guidelines issued on 14 August. The Minister stated:

> There are tensions in this area, delegates, as you will only be too well aware from the continuing publicity campaigns. However, despite such campaigns, and despite the demands, reasonable and unreasonable, that are made on the Labor Government's finite resources, the state-aid issue is dead. As a party, we know enough to avoid being drawn again into what was a bitter, sterile and confused debate.Pressure groups can add...to the perpetual chorus of voices complaining that the Government doesn't give them enough money, but they cannot accuse us of ignoring the educational needs of any child...

As 14 August approached, the daily press anticipated a freeze on recurrent funding to high resource schools which would whittle away their funds by inflation and threaten the future of some. It was suggested that the Government would 'concentrate on both poorer private schools and the Government school system'. Terry Monagle, secretary of ATVCSS and vice president of the ITF, welcomed these possibilities as an 'historic decision'.[4] On the other hand, an editorial in *The Herald* attacked 'the tired argument that private schools are the preserve of the so-called privileged classes. If that is so today, Australia must have the most prodigious aristocracy in the world'. It pointed to the danger of 'tunnel vision', bowing to 'the teacher unions and hardliners within the Labor Party'.[5]

## GUIDELINES 1985-88

The Minister claimed in a 'Background':

> These Guidelines represent an historic recognition by the Commonwealth of the dual system of schooling in Australia and the need to plan for its development in a manner which promotes social harmony, educational co-operation and the planned, efficient use of resources. These Guidelines mean that the Government has put the State aid debate behind it, through the consolidation of the funding system for Australian schools, and the development of that system in a way which will maximise the achievement of improved participation, equity and quality.

Mrs Joan Child, the Deputy Speaker in the House of Representatives, wrote in similar terms, but the title of her article, 'A common basis for the support of all schools', was certainly misleading.[6] Each of the Catholic weeklies on the eastern seaboard carried a full page Government advertisement with details of 'a common funding basis for all schools, both government and non-government'.

The Guidelines, as they applied to non-government schools, included:

* a 'minimum' Commonwealth grant for all schools, with no reduction in real terms from 1984;

* funding allocations towards an eight year target based on a 'community standard', the first four years to be guaranteed...;

* general recurrent funds to increase, in 1985, by $10.6 m., or 1.8% in real terms. The increase for government schools was $18.2 m., or 5.7%;

* increased enrolments in the non-government sector were anticipated to cost $17 m. to $22 m., but are now estimated at $10 m. to $15 m.;

* funding of 12 categories, with real increases for low resource schools;

* a new needs formula (§);

* increased accountability for the expenditure of funds, including justification of 'any inability to offset further declines in the value of contributed services';

* negotiation of 'durable agreements...agreed arrangements';

* the introduction of a *Basic Learning in Primary Schools Program* and establishment of a *Quality of Education Review Committee.*[7]

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§ This is now known as the Education Resources Index, comparing a school's Net Private Income (NPI) with an Assessment Standard (AS), which is related to progress towards the 'Community Standard'.

ERI = NPI/AS x 100, where NPI = Total Private Cash Income plus Contributed Services less Allowances for boarding costs and day-school capital-related expenditure.

*CRITIQUE*

*'The Government accepts that the Commonwealth shares with the States and non-government school authorities, a responsibility for the education of all Australian children.'* [8]

This 'responsibility' does not include the elimination of the heavy burden placed on parents of modest or low income, who send their children to non-government schools.

* *'The Government acknowledges that parents may choose, for educational, religious, cultural or other reasons, a non-government schooling for their children.'*

The phrase, 'parents may choose', is a concession and does not imply any right to choose without discrimination.

* *'The Government also accepts that it has a responsibility to co-operate with States and non-government school authorities to ensure a satisfactory standard of education for students...'*

If one accepts that the resource 'standard' in the Catholic sector, for example, is about 70% of that in the government school sector, there is no hope of bridging this gap, without an increase in fees, which would make the schools more 'elitist'. In 1985, very few pupils are in Category 12 schools, and they will receive only $20 (Primary) and $23 (Secondary) more, in real terms, than in 1984.

* *In determining the level of funding, the Government will have regard to educational need, the efficient use of available resources and the complementary right of parents who choose a public education for their children.'*

This is an ambiguous statement. First, the Commonwealth Government uses 'educational need' in low resource non-government schools as the criterion when distributing funds within this sector, but it does not apply the principle when comparing recurrent resources in these schools with those in an average government school. Secondly, prior to these Guidelines, it has not attempted to assess 'the efficient use of available resources'. Thirdly, 'the complementary right of parents' justifies their children in a government school receiving 100% funding compared to partial funding for a child in a non-government school.

* *'Governments have a primary obligation to the public education system. This Government is wholly committed to the public system's principle of openness to all...'*

These sentences provide the basis for the rationale of Government policies; the rest is political concession. Admittedly, many Australians have come to accept that the State is the proper agent to educate their children. Accordingly, they have chosen government schools for their sons and daughters. That is their right, and the pupils are entitled to education of high standard. But there are an unknown number of parents who have no choice. They cannot afford to pay, or are not prepared for the sacrifices involved in paying, their share of State school costs and, then, from their after-tax income, for 'private' schooling.

## THE NON-GOVERNMENT SCHOOL RESPONSE

Senator Ryan remarked, at the National Press Club, that 'there is no legitimate way in which the State aid debate can be pursued'.[9] She spoke of the quiet reception from an audience which included ATF members and private school parents and commented:

> They'd been taken by surprise. The private school sector had really believed all that stuff that we were going to lop their legs off under their knees. Even though we said all the time we weren't, they really believed it. Some of them were very easily persuaded that we were engaging in ideological warfare and had chosen this as the battleground. I think they were so vastly relieved that they weren't going to be put out of business that all that stuff they'd prepared was irrelevant.[10]

The responses gave some support for the Minister's evaluation. CECNSW referred to 'an enlightened establishment of certain principles, basic to Australia's situation as a free pluralist society'.[11] T. Chapman, chairman of NCIS, 'welcomed the Government's significant moves to bring about funding justice...'[12] Monica Turner of the Sydney Catholic P & F was the most concerned, particularly at the acceptance of the AEC's principles for new non-government schools.[13]

The Australian Parents' Council raised certain points of criticism: the potential for increasing the resources gap between government and non-government schools as a result of departure from the nexus with actual expenditure in government schools; the lack of opportunity for the non-government school parents' voice in the setting of 'agreements'; and the insufficiency of new places in non-government schools. However, a Press Release referred to 'other pleasing features' and stated: 'The Hawke Government is to be congratulated on its courage in acknowledging the right of each child in a non-government school to a basic grant which is to be increased in real terms on an annual basis. The APC applauds this declaration of principle...' This sentence is a general interpretation of the Guidelines, which uses the word minimum (not 'basic') grant, says it is to be held constant (not 'increased') in real terms, and only uses the word right 'in determining the level of funding' in the context of 'the complementary right of parents who choose a public education for their children'.[14]

The Parents' and Friends' Federation of Western Australia, an affiliate of the APC, made relevant points in submissions to Senator Susan Ryan (16 August) and the Hon B. Burke, Premier of W.A. (18 October). Would the categorisation of a non-government school community be adversely determined if it worked hard to increase private input? Analyses of AISNSW were quoted to suggest that the abolition of 'the nexus' and the adoption of 'the community standard' would reduce funding by 1992: in the case of category 4 a drop from 30% to 23% of estimated 'government school standard cost', in the case of Category 8 from 40% to 33%. One might ask: Why isn't the 'Community Standard' taken as the *total* cost of educating a child in a government school?

## THE REACTION OF THE ATF AND ACSSO

In a joint statement with ACSSO, the ATF claimed that the Government was undermining State schools. Lyle Schunter, secretary of the QTU, said the guidelines 'reeked of political opportunism'.[15] The president of the DOGS, Mr R. Nilsen, considered that the Guidelines promoted 'division, educational piracy and private prilivege'. They were the action of 'an arsonist, not a fireman'.[16]

## PRAGMATISM AND PRINCIPLE

The Guidelines bear the mark of the Prime Minister. This was recognised by the Australian press. For an editorial in *The Herald*, 'the great pragmatist strikes again... If 750,000 children attend non-government schools, how many votes will be lost if Commonwealth funds are cut? The answer? Plenty. This will anger Labor supporters in the teacher unions who will see it as a betrayal of past loyalties in the name of political expediency.'[17] For Douglas Wilkie in *The Sun*, it was 'learn to win votes with teacher Hawke'[18];for Michelle Grattan in *The Age*, it was 'votes put before ideology'.[19] This, at least, is what the sub-editors thought in their headings. *The Canberra Times* carried a cartoon (by Pryor) with its editorial analysis. It depicted a private home with a kennel marked 'DOGS'; outside was a RSPCA van. As the RSCPA man (Bob Hawke) opens a case titled 'Humane Gun', the maid ('Susan Ryan') asks: 'What am I going to say to them?'. He replies: 'Just tell them he had the unfortunate habit of leaping out and biting passing voters.'[20]

Mr Hawke was probably swayed by a number of factors. I omit his personal views on equity, but they, doubtless, played some part. He has not shown bias against the non-government school 'system' and realises that there can be no 'consensus' or 'accord' without recognition of the needs of parents with children in these schools. However, he has proved himself to be a master politician with a better insight into the mind of the majority of Australians than the principled gentlemen, with some ladies, of the Labor Left. That is the cause of his popularity. First, as *The Catholic Weekly* stated, 'the most potent influence on the Government's decision was the power of parents. Right across Australia, they protested...'[21]

Secondly, he realised that the ATF had over-played their hand and that, in any case, it was essential to lessen their influence and alliance with the Socialist Left in the Labor Party branches throughout the nation. In addition, Mr Hawke was, doubtless, aware - as Michelle Grattan wrote - 'the unfortunate Federal Opposition was left standing with its mouth open, stunned by the boldness of it all'.[22]

While Susan Ryan defended the Guidelines ably and without hesitancy, she presented a picture of continuity of policy; the facts made this a fiction. The heading of an article by Helen Trinca read: 'Shift to the right works wonders on Sue Ryan', who was quoted as saying, 'I wish the ATF, and the teachers' federations generally, would embark on more positive campaigns... they're ignoring the budgetary realities and the political realities we are faced with.'[23]

Few agreed with the statement in the Guidelines that they 'mean that the Government has put the State aid debate behind it'. For *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 'the Federal Education Minister was talking like a politician, for there is no evidence to suggest that her hope will be achieved'[24]; for *The Advertiser* (Adelaide), 'it is surely Hawkespeak... While the political pragmatism of the proposal will be generally popular, and will alleviate fears of Socialism's removing individual liberties of choice, the philosophical debate on State funding for private schools has not been eliminated, merely eased.'[25] *The Courier-Mail* (Brisbane) considered that 'the Government has done an about face'.[26] Geoffrey Barker wrote emotivally of Susan Ryan's 'brazen defiance' of the ALP conference resolution and expressed the opinion that 'the most swinish hypocrisy in Senator Ryan's address to the National Press Club was her claim that the Government's education funding decisions reflected Labor's concern for social equity'.[27]

*The Sydney Morning Herald* reported official ALP explanations, but they did not make sense to the uninitiated. Bob McMullan, national secretary, said that 'resolutions were as binding as actual clauses of the official platform, but where the set of general principles in the platform might conflict with the specifics of a resolution carried by the conference, the platform was more binding'. Susan Ryan said that the Guidelines were based on the Commission's report, submissions from interested groups and the party's platform commitments which she said were 'a little bit different from resolutions passed at the conference'. My assessment is that the resolution was a reasonable interpretation of the platform and that the Guidelines involved a departure from its general thrust.[28]

## EDITORIALS IN THE PRESS

For *The Australian*, 'the concept of "wealthy" schools is misleading, as the marketable assets of a school can bear little if any relation to the wealth of the parents who send children to them. There is a manifest injustice in penalising parents who are prepared to make financial sacrifices for the education of their daughters and sons and to deny public assistance to schools whose "wealth" often results from the voluntary contributions of their far from wealthy supporters.'[29]

*The Courier-Mail* noted that 'there have always been those people in the community who object to any funding of private schools. But their objections seem to stem from class bias rather than common sense. The parents of children attending non-government schools pay their taxes... There seems no valid reason, particularly in this age of preoccupation with discrimination, why they should be placed at a financial disadvantage because they choose a different educational path. In any case, the necessity for some children to attend private schools is dictated, in Queensland at least, by the tyranny of distance.'[30]

*The Canberra Times* considered that there was no foundation in equity for abolition of subsidies to children who do not attend government schools... 'its totalitarian nature is thoroughly repugnant.

Within what is fundamentally a silly system, the Government has done several clever things'...in a package that is 'hard to fault. But it can be faulted, because the system itself is faulty. Wealthy families will continue to receive a totally subsidised education for their children by sending them to government schools, while poor families will continue to receive a partial subsidy by choosing non-government schools.'[31]

*The West Australian* stated: 'The Government has decided to move with public opinion, rather than be swayed by the prejudices of the teachers' unions and others who seem less concerned with the quality of education than with a dogmatic desire to crush the private school system. The tired arguments of the anti-State aid campaigners about private schools being the preserve of the rich ignore reality... Private schools take a significant share of the burden away from government schools, and thus help to reduce total education costs.'[32]

## THE LABOR CAUCUS CONSIDERS THE GUIDELINES

Hawke opened the Caucus debate with a general statement that the Labor Party should fear internal division more than the Opposition. P. Staples, chairman of the Caucus education sub-committee, and Senator Olive Zakharov, then moved that the Guidelines did not comply with the resolutions of the July conference, because they diminished the Government's responsibility to public schooling and ignored its obligation under the prices and incomes accord. Senator Ryan spoke for 30 minutes claiming that the Guidelines had been well received, had benefited government schools, and had defused the State aid debate. The motion was defeated on the voices.[33]

## THE SCHOOL COMMISSION'S RESPONSE

Dr Tannock made an official statement on the Guidelines:

> The Government's decisions are generally consistent with the advice it received from the Commission... He welcomed the Government decision to adopt a community standard [which] will provide a more principled basis for the funding of all schools... Another important decision was the lengthening of the funding cycle [which] will bring calm and stability... There is very good news for the neediest non-government schools. Grants to non-government schools operating above the community standard will be maintained in real terms... The new basic learning in primary schools program was a major initiative... The quality of education review committee had a significant contribution to make next year in relation to the proposed agreements to be drawn up between the Commonwealth, States, and non-government school authorities.

The Commission's *Report for 1985: Response to Government Guidelines* appeared on 14 September, 1984. It welcomed the 'initiatives', but expressed regret that budgetary constraints made the Government unable to increase funding for specific purpose programs. It, also, believed that there was urgent need for additional support in the area of Aboriginal education.

The report's comment on the 'Community Standard' is relevant: 'The new funding arrangements provide an incentive for schools and systems to improve their efforts in ways which are consistent with the rate of progress towards the Community Standard (2.7)... Objectives...relate to the encouragement of non-government schools operating at levels below standard to improve their recurrent resource use.' While 2.24 recommended that 'schools operating below the Community Standard should not be disadvantaged in the review of their progress towards that Standard if they have made efforts from their own resources', the thinking of the report is caught between the poles of 'agreements' and the reality of parents' means.[34]

The report neglects the following facts:

1. The term 'funding partners' is inappropriate. Can one speak of parents as partners of equal standing with the States and Commonwealth which have control over parents' tax moneys?

2. During the immediate post-Karmel period, targets were attained rapidly in the government sector, with the great majority of non-government schools now operating at 70% of State school resources. Senator Ryan is confident that the States will enter into resource agreements, but even if they regard themselves bound by the expenditure contained with the framework of the standard, it is unlikely that the gap with low resource non-government schools will close. It is impossible to understand how the present measures are, as the Minister has claimed, 'an eight year target for bringing all schools up to a satisfactory standard'.[35]

3. Following consultation with State authorities, the Government decided that the Commission's weighting of the Community Standard for government schools (5%) should be increased to 10% because Government school systems 'alone bear the legal responsibility for providing an educational service throughout the country... (2.9)'. On the other hand, Davy, in his Minority report to *Funding Policies for Australian Schools*, required a strategy to ensure 'that the better resourced States such as Tasmania, Victoria and South Australia would not see a worsening of most of their resource provision (especially in secondary schools)...' There was no suggestion that children in government schools in each State should have 'equality of opportunity'.

The *Guidelines 1985-88* concentrate on 'relative needs' of non-government schools, but make no mention of distribution according to needs in government schools. This has been a cause of concern to the Schools Commission. For example *Program Guidelines 1984* (April, 1984) refers to general recurrent grants in these terms: 's. 8 of the *States Grants (Schools Assistance) Act 1983* requires government education authorities to distribute these Commonwealth funds within their systems according to the respective needs of government primary and secondary schools in the State.'

NEW NON-GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS

According to a CSC document 'Application for eligibility for Commonwealth assistance' (July, 1984), the Government's Guidelines to the Commission of July, 1983, stated:

* Where a proposed new school is located in a developing area, those sponsoring such schools are required to show that there has been prior consultation and, where possible, joint planning with State education authorities. Where a proposed new school is located in an established area, the Commission is required to determine the effect of the proposed new school on existing schools in terms of enrolments, curriculum, staffing structure, financial and other resources and utilisation of facilities (p. 11).

* Proposed new schools which have not been initially supported by Commonwealth capital grants should demonstrate that their long term viability is not necessarily contingent upon expectations of Commonwealth capital assistance' (p. 21).

Some questions for applicants were as follows:

* What level of unpaid assistance from parents and/or the community does the school expect to receive? (p. 5). (This issue does not arise in government schools where parent participation is accepted, either without financial penalty or supplementary funding.)

* On what basis has the school determined the fee structure? Estimate remissions for the first five years of operation (p. 7).

* Attach a map of the proposed catchment area. List all schools in the area; sources of the first year's enrolment (pp. 11-12).

* Recurrent Income/Expenditure, recurrent and capital over five years, even including grants received by the school on behalf of students (e.g., ABSEG, State education allowances) (p. 14). Note: Aboriginal Secondary Grants are home/boarding allowances, and a small personal allowance. What are technically called 'education allowances' in Victoria (see Chapter 29) have always been regarded as student/family, not school, benefits. The collection of the data and its use are two separate issues. However, when the Schools Commission (*Report for the Triennium 1979-81, 6.32*) analyses the value of family allowances and claims, on this base, that it is confident in its 'expectation of 25 per cent of target resource standards as the total private effort requirement for Group 3 schools', one cannot be too cautious.

The Interim Administrative Guidelines (issued by the Government to the Commission on 28 July, 1983) for new non-government schools commencing in 1985 are quoted in a Commission document:

> It is the Government's intention that new schools should not seriously threaten the educational and financial viability of existing schools (8.1)... Planning should have regard to the traditional pattern of enrolments in government and non-

> government schools... (9.2). [Contrast]: While promoting better planning and improved co-ordination in relation to the development of new non-government schools, the Government does not intend to deny communities the right to choose the type of educational provision they consider appropriate (1.3).

On 24 August, 1984, the Minister announced the names of a panel of Schools Commissioners who were to report on 'co-operative arrangements for the planning and development of new non-government schools'. It was chaired by Ms Lyndsay Connors and included Sr Denise Desmarchelier, Professor R. Sackville, Messrs D. Swan and V. Faulkner. From 1985, new schools will be required to meet the enrolment guidelines set out in the AEC's *Registration of non-government schools.* The Ministerial release stated: 'The Government is concerned that the development of new schools would not lead to a downgrading of opportunities in existing schools. Our new schools policy aims to achieve an orderly and planned approach which preserves the legitimate interests of both the government and non-government sectors.' [36]

On 12 October, Commissioner Connors submitted a discussion paper. Significant phrases were: 'the the Government's Guidelines require the panel to address issues relating to the provision of Commonwealth financial assistance for new non-government schools only (s. 7)'; 'policies...may need to ensure that government schools which have a legal responsibility for the provision of schooling for all students who wish to attend, are able to provide services of the highest possible standard...(s. 9)'; 'there would appear to be considerable merit in the development of joint planning bodies at the State level (s. 24)'; 'the effect of new places does not necessarily differ according to whether they are in new or established schools (s. 41)'.

## STATES GRANTS (SCHOOLS ASSISTANCE) BILL 1984

The main features of this Bill, insofar as they related to the opening of new non-government schools or changes and relocation of existing schools, were that there should be 'adequate consultation with education authorities of the State'; 'reasonable prospects of long-term viability, 'not likely to have a significant adverse effect on the viability of existing government or non-government schools (if any)' (p. 21).

When reading in the Bill in the House of Representatives and the Senate, Mr Dawkins and Senator Ryan used the same wording:

* The policies embodied in this Bill are designed to produce for, the first time, a rational system of Commonwealth funding for schools and an accompanying redefinition of the respective roles of the Commmonwealth, States and non-government school communities in providing financial support for schools... With this funding scheme, we believe that we have buried for good the futile debate on State aid...

* Commonwealth agreements with non-government school authorities will ensure that Commonwealth funds are directed to raising standards and will require a partnership with non-government school authorities in

pursuing this objective... Schools which fail to maintain their private effort, and which have no justification for failing to do so, may be assigned to a lower grant category. The Commonwealth would welcome moves by schools operating above the Community Standard to use their Commonwealth grants to ensure greater access for students from lower income families...' [37]

The Bill was debated in Parliament in October, 1984. The Opposition had little to say about the funding proposals, except to speak of the Labor Party's 'death bed' and 'election eve' repentance. However, Mr Howard stated: 'I am worried that these new guidelines will impact unfairly on some of the smaller independent school groups...' This appears a sounder appraisal than that of Mr Maher (ALP), quoting Senator Ryan, that 'the test...will be sympathetic to schools'. [38]

Senator Ryan responded to the attack by saying, 'I think it is really quite nonsensical...to maintain that there should be no restrictions of any kind on any initiative to establish a school in the non-government sector... I look forward to seeing a higher standard of registration implemented by State authorities...' When completely omitting reference to the building of new schools in the government sector, she must know that State Governments can do as they will using 'primary obligation' theory (cf. s. 13(a) of the 1973 Schools Commission Act) as overriding 'the prior right of parents to choose' as cited in s. 13(b). [39]

### *CRITIQUE*

N. Hart spoke on behalf of 6,800 children in 34 'Christian Parent Controlled Schools'. 'Our schools are parent-controlled, not church-controlled. They are controlled by parents who want to find the best Christian education available for their children. These new measures will make it difficult for all new private schools to be set up, but in our case they will make it almost impossible because our schools start from small classes and then grow with time.' He said that larger private schools had greater lobbying powers with the Government, while the smaller independent schools 'could not strong-arm anyone into listening to us'. The same report of *The Sydney Morning Herald* claimed that 'Senator Ryan's announcement has been received with only minimal apprehension by the established private school systems, including the Catholic and Anglican hierarchies'. [40]

The non-government school community has an obligation to respect and fight for parent rights wherever they are in jeopardy. Small alternative schools are accepted and financed at very heavy recurrent cost in the government sector; the onus of proof should fall on Governments determined to oppose them in the non-government sector. This is particularly true in a developing area, where parents should be supported in building schools of their choice (1.3 above) rather than have Governments swamp 'the market' at high cost with 'the traditional pattern' (9.2 above) and then plead 'significant adverse effect'.

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8-9. (8): Cf. S.Ryan, speech to the Australian Association of Special Education, 31 August, 1984: 'As Minister, I am concerned with and responsible for the education of all Australians.' (9): Address to the National Press Club, 15 August, 1984.

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38. Howard, J. CPD, 9 October, pp.1936, 1939; M. Maher, p. 1950; P. Baume, 10 October, 1984, pp. 1524, 1525; B. Teague, p. 1528.

39. Ryan, S. CPD, 10 October, 1984, pp. 1535, 1537. Note the Minister's address to the annual conference of ACSSO, 16 October, 1984, where she summarised and defended the rate of increase of Commonwealth funding to government schools in the period to 1992.

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# 25 Victorian Governments and the world they faced

## INTRODUCTION

According to Yasunabu Miyazaki, a junior high school teacher in Japan was asked in 1984: 'Why is violence rampant in schools today?' She replied: 'You haven't worded the question properly. Teachers and students are no different... What has changed is the world we live in.'[1] We are still the same human beings, but our values - as they appear in practice, at least - are modified as we conform to the world, i.e., to the values of the majority of those who live in it.

## THE NEW SOCIETY: 1965-

In 1964, the writer submitted a survey to a co-operative Year 12 class of some 40 boys. It was over-ambitious and remains unpublished. Space permits no more than the central conclusion: a seventeen year-old boy is concerned primarily with basic instincts, marriage and peace or, if one wishes, sex and survival in war.[2] Changes in sexual mores were manufactured for them in the 1960s, and Vietnam was their nearest war. As Brigadier S.L.A. Marshall, a noted historian of infantry combat in Vietnam, remarked, TV supplied 'blood on the moon every night'.

### Sex

The sexual revolution hit girls and women, in particular. Steroid pills and mechanical devices were aimed at preventing unwanted pregnancies, but robbed many women of a sense of well-being. In addition, women began to realise that the revolution was of more advantage to male gratification than to the freedom and deepest longings of their own sex. According to an article (1977) in Melbourne University's student publication *Farrago* (not inclined to inhibitions), the prevailing attitudes among the 'boyfriends' of female students was: 'If you get pregnant that's your look-out. I don't give a damn.' The author, Steve Rosenthal, commented: 'Which shows perhaps that women's liberation exists in student publications and debating halls, but not in student bedrooms.' [3]

Miyazaki states: 'The mass media fosters sexual freedom. It is destroying the norms that educators have tried desperately to uphold. Respect has been lost for modesty and tradition. The media makes it impossible for the new and the old to coexist. It encourages people to seek instant gratification. Television, especially, has spawned a "me" generation obsessed with materialism and hedonism.' [4]

When Simone de Beauvoir wrote *The Second Sex* in 1949, she looked forward to the emancipation of women through socialism. In 1978, she considered that 'socialism is a dream and exists nowhere' and that women had far greater cause to fear for their physical safety than she had in the days of her girlhood. [5]

Rape is a distasteful subject; its incidence and causes cannot be dealt with here. However, some comment is relevant in relation to 'the sexual revolution'. Where the rape of females was once looked upon with horror, it is now tolerated by more of the community than one would think - particularly the native-born Australian middle class. The novelist Anne O'Grady has remarked: 'What specially bugs me is that at the mention of the word "rape" in any social gathering people will laugh.'[6] It would appear, also, from reactions to the 'educational' play 'Out of the Blue' that teachers have been shocked at the reaction of boys for whom rape was a macho show of strength to be respected.[7] Worse still (if this is possible) is the crude, insensitive reference to be found among some middle-class TV 'entertainers' and press columnists. I see no purpose in citing names and references.

I have earlier suggested that feminists such as Germaine Greer are showing more insight into the relation of sex to life and love; however, her public comment is often at a superficial level. For example, she was recently reported as claiming that families were 'too claustrophobic' to be able to deal with a child's developing sexuality. Then there is sense: 'Give the child a measure of privacy'; and nonsense: 'Leave sex to the peer group'. Many would agree that, 'It's even worse to leave it in the hands of the schools.'! [8]

Generalisations on relationships between the sexes are dangerous, but I incline to the view of Steven Goldberg: 'Man's job is to protect woman and woman's is to protect the infant - in nature all else is luxury.' [9]

### War

Again in 1965, the First Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment, entered Phuoc Tuy province in Vietnam, to be replaced by infantry battalions in which regulars were mixed with conscripts by ballot. Young Australians were well commanded and did their duty honourably, but dissension in the Universities rose to a peak after the Viet Cong's Tet (February, 1968) attacks.

One cannot be precise, and local conditions had a profound effect but, in my experience, the alienating effects of Vietnam spread, from 1968 on, to the State schools first and the Catholic schools a year or two later. Many younger teachers in the government system played an important role in encouraging a spirit of protest and in generating instability. The sex revolution and revulsion against war merged in the attractive slogan: 'Make love, not war.' With the withdrawal of the last of the Australian troops in early 1972, Vietnam was no longer the same issue to Australians, but its impact persisted in disturbed schools.[10]

### The peer group

The 'me' generation reacted collectively against the authority that wanted them to be chaste and to draft the young men for war. It was presented as a conflict of generations, but the young often had sympathisers and allies among academics, journalists and the younger clergy. The warning, 'Don't trust anyone over thirty', did not apply to everyone, but woe betide those who warned against self-indulgence.

They were branded as censorious and puritanical, particularly by those with a vested interest in 'freedom of expression'. The media, with the support of the advertising industry seeking a teen-age market for their clients, promoted the youth culture or 'counter-culture'. Stars of the rock-music industry, showing no restraint on or off stage, had a lead role in corrupting two generations of young people.

The young probed their pysches and sought 'fulfilment' and 'meaningful relationships' with others. 'If it feels good, do it' and 'You can do as you wish, as long as you don't hurt anybody' became popular slogans. If the young turned to religion, it was not to main-stream Christianity, but to forms of nature worship, Eastern meditation cults, even astrology and witchcraft.

Since the late 1960s, there has often been fuel on the ground - in varying amounts; sometimes, it has been lit; sometimes, schools have been fortunate in avoiding the destructive influence of malicious peer groups with gifted leaders. According to one writer, 'trouble makers came from good homes and were often pupils who distinguished themselves in things that interested them'.[11] One thing is certain. It is one thing to have 'a class clown' who lightens the day and another to have a disrupter who is set up by an intelligent peer group leader. The latter was identifiable, but the 'informal' organisation of the group made proof of involvement difficult.

As John Bremer has noted: 'The peer group exerts far more control over its members than teachers, or parents, ever will. Before trying to reform schools perhaps we ought to understand that.'[12] Or as he has said elsewhere, 'the teachers or administrators are not really the leaders any more than the keepers are the leaders of the zoo'.[13] If an adolescent wants to be accepted by the peer group, he or she has to abide by its norms and adopt its life style. As Marshall McLuhan said in the March, 1969 edition of *Playboy*: 'From Tokyo to Paris to Columbia, youth mindlessly acts its identity quest in the theatre of the streets, searching not for goals but for roles...' Sergeant Joan Paffett of a Police squad in Russell Street, Melbourne, has said: 'Leaving home to live on the streets has become fashionable. The main cause is peer pressure.'[14]

Most secondary students who resent bad behaviour are apathetic and, with some justification, frightened. 'Human respect', with some 'gutlessness', has also been a failing of teachers, particularly in disunited staffs. Peer group pressure exists very strongly in many staffrooms.

Young people can be placed in circumstances where they have legitimate grievances against either structures or teachers. They should have opportunities to discuss their position - in ways which solve, not exacerbate the situation. The strength of will and goodness of a young leader can be a powerful means to right action. However, if the malevolent do not respond to moderation and reason, they can only be countered by separation from the environment where they are a source of trouble. Malcontents can often win over their parents, who are confused by the issues and influenced by the innuendo and common information disseminated throughout the adult network. In addition, parents are increasingly disturbed at the possibility of 'losing' their children - to sex, alcoholic drink, or drugs - by failure to give support.

Parallels in the English scene

John Rae, headmaster of Winchester, shows (in *The Public School Revolution*, 1981) that there was an amazing similarity in the English scene during the same period. Rae noted that 'the permissive or self-indulgent society had been created by adults to suit themselves; they had not appreciated that the young would seize the opportunity to assert their own independence (p. 92)'. Children reared in unstable marriage relationships were introduced to a highly charged sexual atmosphere in which drugs were easily available. Children noted the anxieties and insecurities of their parents and were not slow to take advantage of them. As for schools, Rae notes that 'there is, after all, an element of bluff in the control of 600 adolescent boys by fifty masters; if the 600 take it into their heads to mutiny, it requires a steady nerve and remarkably quick thinking to restore authority (p. 104)'

A 'blackboard jungle' developed in some metropolitan schools in English working class districts. The syndrome was similar to that found in troubled schools in Australia: permissive attitudes in society; the physical destruction of old communities and their values; rejection of parental authority; frustration and boredom in the 'concrete jungle' of city life; an obsession with money; 'peer group' pressures; and, above all, a belief that the law was 'soft' and that one could escape it. [15]

The school 'institution'

Karmel has noted that 'the way in which students refer to schools as being 'prison like' is evidence enough of the custodial role of these institutions'. In the 1960s, when economic pressures made large classes essential in Catholic schools, they were particularly exposed to this problem. However, in the early 1960s at least, there was a common bond between students and religious teachers. If the students thought of themselves as rats in a rat race, they recognised that a dedicated chief rat was caught with them and was trying to lead them out of the maze. However, in the early 1970s, student resentment was keener, and many teachers were regarded as part of the 'establishment' of the 'institution'.

The De La Salle Brother Damien Harvey, principal of Gilroy College, Sydney, writes with perception of the role of the Catholic school:

> The pressure that parents and teachers exert on young people is minimal compared to the pressure they exert on each other. Those with talent for leadership 'promulgate decrees which have the binding force of hoops of iron. To dare to be different requires a rare strength of character... Maybe they are asking, 'will you accept me as I am, uncertain and curious, uncommitted and critical, not knowing what I want, but knowing that I want something?' In this state, they effectively play a game called stirring out of which can pour a torrent of questions... We do not expect adult commitment from children: 'In this school we do not force you to believe anything, but we ask you to listen respectfully to what we have to say.' [16]

### The tertiary world of the 1980s

Editors of university student newspapers in Melbourne interpreted their world in 'The mood of campus', *The Age*, 27 June, 1981. 'According to La Trobe's *Rabelais*, 'sexual freedom is practised rather than preached - at least among those in their twenties and over, who tend to live with their lovers. Communal living or house-sharing is no longer a matter for excitement... The eroded value of TEAS allowances has created a scramble for part-time work...' 'In the late '60s and early '70s...Monash, especially, became renowned for demonstrations, often violent, which attacked issues like development, nationalism, sexual taboos, traditional concepts of education and the Vietnam war' (*Lot's Wife*). These issues have 'been replaced by unemployment, Aboriginal land rights, national economic independence and self-reliance, and multi-national exploitation...', according to Deakin's *Planet*.

### Bureaucracy and the pleasure principle

Orwell's *1984* received considerable attention in that year of 'grace', but there was little reference to Huxley's *Brave New World*, which, in the 1930s, was required reading by my generation. Huxley pictures a society where pleasure is the principle, and sex is completely separated from hatcheries of procreation. Genetic manipulation ensures the right balance of categories from Alphas down to Epsilons. One little boy, who is reluctant to engage in erotic play with a little girl, is taken to the Assistant Superintendent of Psychology, 'Just to see if anything's at all abnormal'. What happens to the little boy of 1984 who is reluctant to 'make it happy'?

## THE POST-INDUSTRIAL SOCIETY

In addition to these problems, planners in Australia were faced with inflation - a product of the impact of the Vietnam war on the U.S.A. and the high cost of oil from 1973; the deposition of profits from Middle East countries in foreign banks, with lending to the 'Third World' which had no chance of repayment; intense competition from the increasing industrial strength of Japan and the new industrial countries of Asia - Taiwan, Korea, Hong Kong and Singapore; a steady decline in the Australian manufacturing sector associated with unrealistic wage and 'standard of living' demands; a growing social security bill and increasing budgetary deficits which have to be paid for; structural unemployment; a turning away from hard learning, useful knowledge, and reasonable competitiveness in schooling; and, at critical times, drought, flood and fire in a rural sector which, while efficient, was faced with problems.

Some may consider that these are the usual problems - cyclical, or structural, and not enduring - of an industrial society. However, others maintain that our society is 'post industrial', characterised by a rate of irreversible change which makes existing skills obsolescent - unless they are on a broad enough knowledge base to enable assimilation of the 'new'. The TAFE sector of education would, doubtless, consider that it is closely connected with the job market, and this is true in the short-term.

In the long-term, an individual will need more than literacy, mathematics and science; he or she must cultivate new skills - at the interface of new technologies; in management; in decisions on energy supply and the use of resources, on population, food production and care of the environment; and in understanding other peoples' religions, cultures, economies and political systems. Life in a 'global village' makes mastery of foreign languages important. This comprehensive knowledge must be integrated in a man or woman of high ideals, unselfishness, patience, and balance.[17]

Many Australian schools have set up computer classrooms with courses up to Year 12 level. According to the National Computer Education Program, there are two needs: for student 'awareness' of computers and an understanding of their social effects; and 'literacy', which involves acquisition of skills so that one may live effectively in a society in which information technology is increasingly significant.

However, as Senator Baume pointed out in June, 1984, the Federal Labor Government has supplied schools with only $18 m. over the triennium, which is a third of what the Coalition promised, and a quarter of what the Schools Commission recommended.[18] In some quarters, there is still little realisation of the intimate relationship between educational needs/hardware/software/printer/industry support (which involves more than maintenance)/courseware for curricula/teacher training, which should involve all doing some sort of formal course. One of the problems can be attributed to what at first seems a bonus - the proliferation of micro-computer hardware, where there is intense competition, advancing technology, and price reductions. As a result, different States have 'approved' more than one machine and no two States have made the same selections. The catch is that for any national development of software and courseware, a certain degree of standardisation of hardware is necessary. To sum up, there is a requirement for a systems approach.

Computer companies will give more and more attention to collaboration with educational institutions.[19] The use of home computers, and the development of an array of software to enable learning and creation, will be a characteristic of the new age.[20] This may lead to differentiation of children into the 'info-haves' and the 'info-have-nots', the separation being determined along class, income, sex and family size lines. Over exposure of young children to computers may lead to their missing out on sensory experience. There will be opportunities for gifted older children (programming) and for the weak (receiving specialised remedial treatment), but those of middle ability may not get a fair share of 'hands-on' experience.[21]

I first considered these issues in a paper (1964), 'Automation and the Crystal Ball', which stated: 'Those who benefit from the expanding education available will have opportunities in an automated world. Those who miss out will be at a greater disadvantage than their fathers and grandfathers. If present trends continue, there will be no increase in leisure for professional men, business executives, scientists and teachers... The new leisure will flow more to the less educated members of society...'[22]

## EDUCATION IN VICTORIA

The education system in Victoria has, for three decades, been subjected to stresses and strains. During the mid 1960s, there were complete changes in syllabus orientation and content. Attempts were made, in the early 1970s, to deal with disadvantage and lack of student interest by making curricula 'relevant'; in the late 1970s, to halt the decline in literacy and numeracy; and, in the 1980s, to prepare students to contend with a world of high unemployment. As Bob Winder, deputy director general of education in NSW, stated in 1983: 'Each particular crisis is superimposed, not superseded. Our schools have an ever-increasing range of demands placed on them.'[23]

Victorian government school teachers, today, are faced with continually changing departmental demands and uncertainties in administration and curriculum. While Labor accepted the principles underlying the changes introduced by the Hon Alan Hunt as Liberal Minister of Education from mid-1979, it was not responsible for what Dr McKinnon has described as a 'leghorn revolution', i.e., a disturbance in the fowl house 'with the fowls briefly fluttering off their perches in alarm, only to settle back placidly after the disturbance'.[24]

## DR L.W. SHEARS: 1973-84

### The Hon Lindsay Thompson

Shears, who retired from the Department in May, 1984, began, on 7 February, 1939, as a student teacher in Grade 2 of Merri primary school in North Fitzroy. Appointed Director General in 1973, he worked closely with the Liberal Minister of Education, Lindsay Thompson, until the latter became Treasurer/Premier in 1979. Their joint performance was impressive: the delegation of powers to school councils and to the regions, the pioneering of teaching English to migrants, community education, work experience, and 'alternative' schooling.

In an address to the 1977 annual conference of the ATF, Dr Shears said: 'In respect to the administering function...the Director General, while having this general legal responsibility, is surrounded by such a large number of statutory bodies as to make the efficient execution of his responsibility well-nigh impossible... We spend countless hours trying to make the whole historically evolved contraption work.' He coolly and efficiently met the problems of the 1970s - relations with the Federal authorities, and the expansion and upgrading of the State system.

While dedicated to the cause of teaching and teachers, Shears had little sympathy with union demands for more and more benefits, and for their disposition to call strikes. According to Bob Jenkin, president of the VSTA in 1977, 'you can point to a clear habit of authoritarianism in the department. Their normal reaction to anything is to quote regulations saying that the authority of the principal must be maintained at all times'.[25] Shears contended that 'major problems with many of the "unemployed" teachers are that they are not prepared to take up teaching positions anywhere in the State and/or they have the wrong subject qualifications'.[26]

According to Ron Fitzgerald, in 1979 the '19th-century colonial form of organisation...was failing to cope with the strains of the present'. He argued that the department had to hand more power over to the regions.[27] In the view of Maslen: 'Undoubtedly the Education Department is kindly in intent, but the ponderousness of its responses and its vast inertia are powerful deterrents to many people. If the present [1979] conflicts are indeed only the tip of an iceberg of discontent, then changes must be made. Decision making must be decentralised...' [28]

The Hon Alan Hunt

Mr Hunt took over the Education portfolio in mid-May, 1979. One feature of his ministry was his personal involvement in negotiations and his willingness to make concessions - to obtain temporary stability, at least. He quickly settled the first dispute over technical teacher transfers by making them voluntary after consultation; this, of course, necessitated employment of new teachers in some instances. Dr Shears played no significant part in the discussions. [29]

Hunt immediately set out, with all speed, to create a new look in the Education department. Key issues in his *Strategies and Structures for Education in Australia* (May, 1980) were 'decentralisation' and 'community participation'. The Minister accepted the Victorian Industrial Training Commission's concept of 'post-primary schools' in place of the separate 'high' and 'technical' schools. Following a survey by a firm of management consultants, a ministerial statement: *New Directions in the Administration of Education* (September, 1981) spelt out the detail in which five country regions and seven metropolitan regions were to manage and implement policies, formulated at the central level and brought into operation at the school level.

Shears agreed with the overall aims of the new Minister, but became unpopular when he warned of the 'political' dangers of changes brought in 'too quickly'. Mr Hunt simply replied: 'Leave the politics to me, son'. The appointment of Dr Shears as Co-ordinator General in 1981 could be regarded as a 'boot upstairs' as his new role was essentially advisory, even though he claimed that he was responsible for formulation of policy. [30] Dr Norman Curry was appointed Director General and maintained that the responsibilities of this office had not changed.

In commenting on Professor R. Selleck's John Smyth Memorial lecture (1982), 'Is he to be a Little Lord God Almighty', Dr Shears referred to 'the traumatic events of 1981-82' and stated: 'Certainly by the end of 1981 there was no doubt that the Ministers [ Hunt and Lacy ] were the "little LGAs"... Under political stress and the election uncertainties of 1981, evolution became revolution, community and teacher analysis became business management analysis...' [31]

In a report (July, 1984) to the Labor Minister of Education, the Hon R. Fordham, Dr Shears refers to a 'bewildering array' of more than 40 statutory authorities, boards, councils and lobby groups, all seeking access to the Minister, and to the need for streamlining of procedures. One recommendation, consistent with criticisms in this monograph, was the setting up of a financial and statistical advisory unit. [32]

### Teacher training

Maslen's *Age* articles for 4 August, 1981 ('The great college carve-up') and 4 June, 1984 ('The legacy of the Razor Gang') both start with reference to 'the chill winds of an educational ice age'. He traces its beginnings, back in July, 1979, to Mr Hunt's decision to give the Victorian Post-Secondary Education Commission responsibility for the administration of CAEs and State teachers' colleges. The Commission's chairman, Dr Graham Allan, called for a reduction of student intakes because of an oversupply of teachers. He initiated a process of rationalisation and mergers, which gathered impetus when the Commonwealth decided to slash expenditures. In April, 1981, Mr Fraser's 'Razor Gang' sought the merger of 30 teachers' colleges across the nation. Some have occurred; some have been modified; some have been rescinded. The main advantage has been an increase in the number and range of educational options; the main problem has been the separation of campuses and the lack of money to implement mergers.

The difficulties have been felt most severely by Victoria College (Prahran CAE / Burwood, Rusden and Toorak State Colleges); and Melbourne CAE (Melbourne State College / Institute of Early Childhood Development). These pressures have also been experienced by the Chisholm Institute of Technology ( Caulfield Institute of Technology / State College at Frankston), but the expansion of student numbers at Frankston from 350 in 1981 to over a 1000 today has been a success story. The Preston Institute of Technology / State College at Coburg had very little overlap of courses and their merger as the Philip Institute of Technology has worked well.

## CAIN AND FORDHAM: 1982

The victory of the Cain Labor Government in 1982 produced initially an apparent stability in State school education. Writing in April, 1983, Phil Carswell, surveying the opinions of teachers, found that 'one feeling that came out repeatedly was optimism'.[33] Joan Kirner described the creation of industrial peace in the schools as restoring public confidence 'from the outside, but more importantly from the inside'.[34]

Various factors were associated with 'a general improvement in morale'. [35] First, from early 1982, salaries rose in stages (11% after Tribunal deliberations, 7% and 4% as public service flow-ons, and 4.3% and 4.1% as a result of national wage cases). Secondly, the new Labor Minister, Robert Fordham, repealed the stand-down regulations, abolished limited tenure, and lifted emergency teacher restrictions.[36] He was determined to solve the perennial problem of relationships with the teacher unions. As a friend said: 'Bob is not in to confrontation. He's not going to tolerate peremptory bureaucrats telling principals or teachers in schools what they have to do. There's going to have to be a much more conciliatory approach to resolving conflicts.' [37] In mid-1983, Mr Fordham considered his major achievement to be 'the establishment of harmony between the State Government and the education community'.[38]

Robert Fordham was elected to the Legislative Assembly in 1970, at the age of 28. He was born and grew up in Footscray where his father was a 'commercial traveller' or, as we would now describe it, 'a travelling salesman'. Fordham is a practising Anglican, who was educated at Essendon High School, and qualified as an accountant. He lives in his electorate in a home overlooking the Maribyrnong river. Throughout his life, Fordham and his family have been closely identified with the local State school system. He has been a member of the councils of Maribyrnong High School and the Footscray Institute of Technology for many years; his wife, Sue, is a teacher at Maribyrnong High and his two children, 11 and 9 year-olds, attend Maribyrnong Primary. [39]

Fordham attaches great importance to 'a closer partnership between teachers and parents. We are saying that the place of parents is not outside the school fence; it is there in the school itself, because they are part of the total school community.' While allowing for greater teacher representation on school councils, he decided that parents should form the majority. [40]

While Mr Fordham 'recently had the opportunity to visit a whole range of non-government schools', he initially gave the impression of not being conversant with or interested in the 25 per cent of children in the non-government sector; in this respect, he did not differ from his Liberal predecessors who considered the State school aspect of their portfolio dominant. However, Fordham has been far less willing than Hamer or Thompson to meet and listen to representations from the Victorian Parents' Council. On 16 April, 1984, he summarised the ALP 1982 pre-election policy, stating that 'groups representing non-government schools...parent and teacher organisations...would be consulted in any proposed policy changes which might affect non-government schools'; this promise was certainly not honoured prior to August, 1983. [41]

The first parting of the ways between the Government and teacher unions came in the 1983 budget which increased clerical assistance, extended migrant education, and expanded capital works, but pruned regional consultants, and teachers for the zoo, museum, and galleries.[42] Cuts to 'emergency teacher' services - a program which, according to Mr Cain, has been 'abused' by teachers - produced a strong union reaction. [43]

Nevertheless, Fordham, wrote confidently at the beginning of 1984: 'As the new administrative structure of the Education Department - with its emphasis on the central position of schools - settles into place, the planned changes will have an important effect on the work of our schools. These changes will include: new post-primary schools which combine the best features of high schools and technical schools; a growing involvement of parents; extensions of computer education programs; further integration of disabled students into 'mainstream' schools ; developments in curriculum to encourage young people to stay longer at school; an effective use of the 'School Improvement Plan'.[44]

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4. Miyazaki, Y., ref 1, op. cit.

5. Pullen, R. 'Simone says she was wrong', The Herald, 11 January, 1978, and J. Cunningham, 'Second thoughts', The Australian, 14 August, 1979. The unqualified acceptance of Picasso, who delights in manipulation and distortion of the female form and, indeed, of woman, is a sign of the standards of our time; see R. Moore, 'Art and Ideology: the Picasso touch', The Age, 10 September, 1984.

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7. Chester, Sarah. 'A stage rape to end the myths', The Age, 15 June, 1984. Directness in guidance is necessary. However, a careful reading of reactions to this play, presented by an Education Department team - and suggestions as to the 'follow-up' for 'educational' purposes - indicate that it did not provide an effective way to help young people and to protect women.

8. See The Catholic Leader, 'Germaine Greer - following a different path', 1 July, 1984 for a perceptive review by the English critic, Kieron Moore, of Greer's book Sex and Destiny (Secker and Warburg). Her comments to Melissa Roberts, 'Keep out of your kids' sex lives: Greer', are quoted in The Australian, 28 May, 1984.

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19. Cf. R. Johnson, 'Jettisoning the educational lifeboat', Education News, 18, no. 10, June, 1984.

20. This is only too evident as I type this work on a high technology/low cost word processor, using software to justify a proportionally spaced type. I am deeply indebted to my colleague, Brother J.B. Boonen, for his initiative in developing the system. Details, including 'unfriendlies' and 'bugs', will be discussed elsewhere. My role has been limited to the writing of feasibility studies and operating experience.

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22. Mortensen, K.G. 'Automation and the Crystal Ball', Our Studies (Christian Brothers), 37, no. 1, May, 1964.

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25. Harris, S. 'School battle lines drawn', The Age, 18 March, 1977. Tension with the unions is also evident in the comment (The Victorian Teacher, August, 1984) of J. Grant, deputy secretary of the VSTA: Thompson's 'twelve years as Minister of Education were aptly compared to the performance of a lizard on a hot rock; the only movement discernible was the occasional poking of the tongue at flies crossing his path.'

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27. Maslen, G. 'School parents strike back in a swell of discontent', The Age, 9 May, 1979.

28. Ibid.

29. Maslen, G. 'New broom...', The Age, 2 June, 1979.

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32. Maslen, G. 'Shears urges education administration shake-up', The Age, 25 July, 1984.

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# 26 The Victorian Government School in 1984

## 1984's TURBULENT SOCIETY

Linley Samuel in a study (1984) - in a State working-class co-educational school - of 'a small group of girls who were classed by the teachers as troublemakers' claimed: 'Teaching in the current social and economic climate, with changing moral standards and high unemployment, is more difficult than it has ever been in the modern era.'[1] Carson Dron, headmaster of St Peter's Lutheran College, Brisbane, speaks of young people having a 'totally different set of values - so different as to be a different language - which are promoted by their peer group and their culture'. He suggests that 'the gap (between these values and the school's) is constantly widening, and there must come a time when the gap becomes unbridgeable'.[2]

There has been concern about whether government schools - 'better equipped, better housed, and better staffed than ever before' - 'can meet the needs of our children' (Fensham, 1982); a judgment that 'the kids are less motivated now [1983] than they were...' (when George Lees of the TTUV began teaching 33 years ago); 'and as parenting becomes more challenging, as the golden rules are tarnished and broken, as society becomes more complex, more fragmented... It is time for all of us to call a halt...to the naive belief that schools can produce quick and sure solutions to complex and deep-seated problems' (Tickell, 1981).[3] For the Radford College Committee of Review, 'frequent criticisms'...are sometimes 'no more than a peg on which to hang an expression of general disquiet about schooling or even anxieties about the state of the society itself'.

In December, 1977, the *Australian Bulletin of Labor*, Flinders University, claimed that the social signs of decay in the Australian way of life are a collapsing faith in old moral verities, a decline in disciplined behaviour and dedicated purposefulness, social disintegration and growing division within society, and a proliferation of transient cultural trends appealing to the instincts rather than engaging the spirit. The general sense of malaise and ennui gripping society was evident in a classic sign - a falling birthrate.[4] The main problem, in the words of David Penman, recently consecrated Anglican Archbishop of Melbourne, is the breakdown of the extended family, 'a turning away from God...to search for answers where there are no answers, in growing materialism'.[5] The young of the 1980s are seeking the best of both worlds: the pleasures of a permissive society and an old-fashioned sort of existence - a decent job, a house which is a home, and a family.[6] Needless to say, the merging of incompatibles generates tension.

The unemployed, overwhelmed by a sense of rejection, and by loss of self-esteem, will need a pretty strong faith if they are going to win through. 'Educationalists' who cultivate the values of the 1960s, in their own lives and in their teaching, do the young no service. Jacques Barzun has noted that 'the ignorance of the unlettered takes no scrutiny to establish. What we need to plumb is the ignorance of the educated and the anti-intellectualism of the intellectual.'[7] For example, John Court, associate professor of psychology at Flinders University, has pointed out that 'progressives' continue to defend their position by placing evidence in compartments - piece by piece - even though this involves rejection of the convergence of evidence - psychological, psychiatric, sociological, criminological, moral, ideological'.[8]

A perceptive letter (1981) from a State school teacher in NSW declares: 'Schools still try to offer those tired and worn values like respect for the dignity of one's fellow man and the need for order in society. However, for some teachers, daily classroom confrontation is their unfortunate theatre of action... I can do little about the causes of student alienation, the breakdown of families, higher divorce rates, the loss of communal values, the difficulties of a society with a national identity problem, and student fear of prospective unemployment.'[9]

## THE 'SYSTEM'S' ATTEMPT TO COPE

There is currently disquiet with an administration that is top-heavy in Melbourne, inadequate in the regions, and uncertain as to responsibility at the school level. Parents are concerned with time-consuming demands and the responsibility for formulating policy through the new school councils. Mr Fordham is aware of these problems.[10]

The destruction of the 'secondary' and 'technical' divisions could well prove a costly mistake. However, one must admit that well-run comprehensive schools, built with magnificent facilities (at high expense), should offer students wonderful opportunities. Only a few schools in the non-government sector will be able - to use a word eschewed by State-school teacher unions but appropriate - to 'compete'. The Victorian State Budget allocations to government school building increased from $128.4 m. (1982-83) to an estimated $176 m. (1983-84); the State makes no provision for building in the non-government school sector. This contrasts with the practice of the Commonwealth which gives capital grants to both sectors on a - roughly - per pupil basis.

At the opening of the school year, some schools were under-staffed; a few were over-staffed. There were high costs in the 'emergency teacher' area and an overall Budget overrun of $ 10 m. When in Opposition, Mr Fordham had been critical of 'treating each school in simple statistical terms'[11], but he now complains that 'schools are notoriously reluctant to give up teachers even if they have been provided as the result of incorrect enrolment estimates'.[12] In 1984, pupil/teacher ratios in Victorian primary schools were the best in Australia; teacher numbers have been maintained despite a decline in enrolments of 26,000 since Labor came into office.

Jim Young, the president of the VTU, noted 'significant staffing improvements resulting in reduced class sizes; the provision of specialist teachers on a shared basis to small schools; the provision of community language teachers; and the availability of additional teachers to be allocated to schools on the basis of need'. New schools have specific music and physical education rooms.[13] In spite of these improvements, Young called for 'a halt to the rapid escalation in funding of non-government schools' - without qualification as to their current resources or other factors of parental income. 'Failure to do so will result in State aid again becoming a massive and divisive issue within the community.' The constant re-iteration of 'division' by the teacher unions, and the use of selective data, has been the main element causing division.

Needs of handicapped children in 'integrated' schools, of students with little or no English, or from disadvantaged homes are apparent. But as Maslen notes: 'What exactly are the needs of children, and how many teachers do you employ to meet them? More significantly, in the light of the present financial crises...how many teachers can you afford to employ?' There has been strong support from parent and teacher organisations for incorporation of disabled children in regular schools, but the unions - the VTU in particular - have warned that money had to be made available if integration was to succeed. Having, on two occasions, taught blind boys Year 11 Physics in large classes during the 1960s, I would agree. Parents should not be put under pressure and regarded as ignorant because they are reluctant to transfer their children from 'special' schools. Mr Fordham is aware of the needs and has given assurances that schools for the disabled will continue.[14] It is unfortunate that the State Government shows little consideration in its financial treatment of some such schools in the non-government sector.

Scholastic expectations in many schools are low; there is an increasing demand for internal, non-competitive assessment. In late 1981, R.G. Ritchie, Acting Director of Technical Education, was justifying the employment of primary school teachers in Years 7 to 9 on the ground that 'a large proportion of the students who enter technical schools each year are considered by the division to be "at risk" '.[15]

## CURRICULUM

Changes in curriculum are being justified on various grounds: that society is changing rapidly and that schools have to be flexible in equipping students to deal with new needs; that schools cater too much for the academically gifted and that a broader range of courses is required; and that there is too much separation between mental and manual activity.

A recent study by the ACER has shown that Victorian government high schools which offer alternatives to the conventional academic program have been successful in retaining students to the end of Year 12. 'Former students replied favorably to questions about how well these courses prepared them for the first year out of school'.[16]

On the other hand, too great a diversification has already led to courses of little educational merit. According to Crittenden: 'The attempt to locate in the school the range of learning required for participation in all kinds of practical activities of life outside the school cannot avoid being artificial and largely inefficient.'[17] To deprive students, often from the poorer classes, of a core which would enable continuing education is the real discrimination.[18]

Curriculum is increasingly diverted away from the 'disciplines' on the ground that 'the real world' is not separated by disciplinary boundaries. Content and interpretation too often reflect the questionable interests and values of society. For example, McKinnon and Swan, Director General of Education in NSW - in their *Future Directions of Secondary Education*, submitted to the NSW Minister of Education in June, 1984 - claim that the concept of 'core curriculum' has lost its value except to describe an outcome, such as thinking logically. A Board of Secondary Education should encourage the development of school-based programs to provide for 'emerging needs or local circumstances'.[19] While there is a need for 'comprehensive' education, those who aspire to certain professional courses must have a foundation in relevant subjects; there is a limit to the provision of 'bridging courses' to help them.

L.A.Endersbee, dean of the engineering faculty at Monash University, complains of the crisis in technological education where 'the concept of mastery of subjects has departed'.[20] There is a 'flight from mathematics', particularly in teacher training at both primary and secondary levels and among girls at the Year 11 to 12 level; the same sort of flight can be seen from subjects that demand rigorous study: physics, chemistry, languages, and English literature.

However, in the past, where young people wished to pursue courses in engineering or architecture, the absence of solid geometry, engineering and art drawing in the 'old-time studies' was a serious deficiency. Another aspect of curriculum is raised by Neil Hooley, a policy adviser to the State Board of Education: 'Children should be encouraged in the active orchestration of their own thinking and learning, in the active integration of theory and practice, in active research.' He admits that these are 'complex questions' but, when he writes enthusiastically about 'research', I am reminded of my efforts to stimulate 'science talent' investigations. Where parents have no professional or technical background with which to give support, a teacher cannot be in class most of the day and also direct a number of research students; or, at least, he cannot keep it up. 'Discovery' was also the spirit of the HSC 'PSSC' physics course, but mastery of concepts by 'discovery' is an uncertain and slow process, and examiners - particularly in Physics - set syllabuses which consumed the teaching year.[21]

A variety of studies - 'peace', 'disarmament', 'nuclear energy', 'the social impact of new technologies', 'multiculturalism', 'land rights', 'race discrimination', 'affirmative action', 'sexism', and 'health and human relations', are topics that should find a place in the school curriculum. However, their presentation demands expertise and balance, with some maturity in the student. The teacher unions attach major importance to the curriculum and to topics such as these, because of their political and social relevance. If present trends continue, these issues will continue to be presented unprofessionally in 'left-wing' modes to children, who have obtained a superficial background from TV.[22] The teacher must have clear principles that guide him towards belief in an objective morality that determines right action. As an educationalist, he must present the issues comprehensively and follow Ernest Hemingway's maxim: 'Tell the story and let the reader get at the truth.'

Reference has already been made in Chapter 12 to the The State Board's 'Draft of Guidelines' for curriculum. *Manifesto for a Democratic Curriculum* by Dean Ashenden (of S.A.), Jean Blackburn, Bill Hannan and Doug White, reflects general thinking in Victorian State school circles.[23] They reject the 'elitist...high culture, as codified in the academic disciplines...' They state that 'it is (rightly) attacked for its class, sex, rational and racial basis, for its carelessness of ordinary life and experience, and for its divorce from the problems and tasks of the society'. They also reject the 'pluralist' answer which is supported by arguments which 'are disappointing to the extent that they neglect the fact that we all have to live in one society, and forget the peculiar responsibilities of schools to the whole society'. The analyses are brief and glib and followed by a vague treatment of the 'democratic' position, which is based on a type of 'pluralism' in which 'school-based' curricula meet 'local' needs. The paper is not noted for either its originality or its depth and inspires little confidence that in-phrases like 'social equality', 'equality of outcomes', 'participate productively and meaningfully in the general culture', will be realised.

Nevertheless, implicit in their discussion of 'institutional practices' is one important point: 'honest' students should not be exposed to curricula at such a level of difficulty that they cannot succeed. In my experience, a number of teachers have been only too willing to reach a modus vivendi with their students up to Year 10, or even Year 11, if they are not involved in teaching Year 12. However, that is 'the end of the penny section', and HSC is competitive for either tertiary education or the job market. It is unjust to the HSC teacher and his 'average' students if he is faced with large classes with no opportunity for remedial education of the weak. It is not so much the 'difficulty' of the syllabuses as their length and available teaching texts; the 'PSSC' physics course (1965-75) was a classic example.

The 'Steinle' report on curricula in the ACT is of some relevance to these issues. It speaks in terms that every teacher of senior classes will recognise - of '"power play" between various subject departments'; of students asking why they have to study a particular topic ('Because its on the course and I can't alter it'). The report points out that it is one thing for all pupils to study a 'common' core of 'essential' subjects, and it is another thing for all pupils to work to syllabuses that will enable them to reach standards sought and obtained in other schools.[24]

Some invited responses to Ashenden et al appealed to me, e.g., a demand that students learn 'about education as it is planned, enacted and experienced in schools'. I hope that this means that the teacher gives students a picture of their year's work, periodically discussing progress and problems, encouraging when difficult concepts need time, thought, practice and revision before mastery is achieved.[25]

## STANDARDS

The role of the Australian Education Council (AEC) in national assessment of student performance has been referred to in Chapter 10. According to an *Age* editorial, an ACER survey on 'reading, writing and number skills of Australian students aged 10 and 14 in 1980 has dispelled widespread myths about declining standards in our schools... Not only has there been no decline in performance in any significant area since the last survey was conducted in 1975... There have been improvements in several specific skill areas'.[27]

A report by Professor Colin Power provides a picture of certain tensions associated with these studies.[28] The 1980 national survey originated in the advocacy of Senator Carrick and was accepted by the AEC (p. 22). The Director Generals in the States were less enthusiastic (pp. 24-28, 31). This was partly due to the fact that the 1975 survey had been interpreted in the media as suggesting that standards in State schools were inferior to those in the non-government sector (p. 11). As a result, the teachers' unions and State school parents' organisations were so hostile that 139 schools, which had agreed to participate, withdrew from the 1980 survey. Because of the opposition of the VTU, in particular, only 64% of Victorian schools co-operated.

Because of the danger of 'misuse' and 'invidious comparisons' (pp. 25-27), a decision was made to avoid comparisons (other than sex) between States, government and non-government schools, and ethnic groups. As a result, no information was published that would have enabled diagnostic assistance to individuals learners/schools/groups; the survey neither revealed why improvement or decline occurs nor how improvement can be fostered (pp. 48, 102, 105). Needless to say, the contentions - as to management and approach - did not make the work of the highly professional ACER any easier; its request for analysis of sub-populations was rejected (pp. 23-27).

Professor Ray Martin, a distinguished inorganic chemist and vice-chancellor of Monash University, notes the loss of respect for rote learning, which provides the memory with a solid store for recall and consideration in increasing depth. Leonie Kramer, and Ian Hansen of Melbourne University, have pointed to the failure in clarity that arises where there is lack of vocabulary and precision in the use of grammar.[29] Another university educator claims: 'If English studies in schools are to be pared to the bones of simple communication skills, and a student's achievement is to be judged solely within that student's personal context, then we sell our society short and assign ourselves to a waist-high culture.' [30]

The Western Australian report (1984) of the Beazley committee seems to seek the best of both worlds: an increase in the standards of literacy and numeracy, with monitoring of the results; and re-vitalisation of the curriculum to enable inter-disciplinary and multi-disciplinary approaches.[31]

## ACCREDITATION

When, in 1983, Professor Kwong Lee Dow - dean of the faculty of education at Melbourne University - retired as chairman of the Victorian Institute of Secondary Education (VISE), his place was taken by Bernard Rechter - director of the Lincoln Institute of Health Sciences. Rechter believes that 'people's faith in the external examination system is sadly misplaced', and that school assessments with 'consensus moderation' or comparison among schools have been a success.[32] However, as one Victorian educator remarked: 'If there is no external examination, fairness will only be seen to happen if there is a comprehensive scheme of monitoring schools and teachers... inspection of schools would be essential' - and it is unlikely that the teacher unions would tolerate this step.[33] The problems associated with 'moderation' include regional groupings that do not represent State profiles, anxiety of teachers to defend the interests of their own students, dislocation of teaching as a result of frequent meetings, the cost/efficiency of emergency teachers, and the paperwork. If there is doubt as to assessments, employers and tertiary institutions might use their own selection procedures or, worse, favour certain schools of recognised quality.

I would not have welcomed internal assessment (with syllabuses as they were), but am only too well aware that there are aspects of performance that were not considered under the 'old' system. For example, practical work in the Sciences was subject to periodic unannounced external inspection - which is fair enough. The assessment was of the teacher and the school; again, I do not object. However, there was never any recognition of the quality of the individual student's work or the degree of co-operation in its performance. All that was required was the teacher's certification that the student had completed and presented the work. Some students who had to be driven to complete assignments - and, thereby, wasted valuable class time - won high marks in the (theory) exam that would not have been justified by a personal report as to reliability.

Certification should provide as much information as possible on a pupil's capacities and potential. This should be presented objectively, but in a sympathetic way, e.g., it is important to recognise the often temporary difficulties of the slow learner, the student of character who is determined to surmount initial failures. I could quote many examples, to be balanced against those of higher academic ability who either lacked will or chose other priorities for human endeavour.

Rechter has stated: 'There are fundamental issues of diversity of curriculum, increased retention rates, better opportunities for students to gain access to tertiary education with less rigid requirements and so on which need to be addressed, and external examinations are only one part of these.' It is likely that VISE's policies will be 'progressive', because its council now includes Tricia Caswell, formerly general secretary of the TTUV and elected full-time industrial officer for the Victoria THC in July, 1984, Wendy Morris, member of Labor's State education policy committee and a representative of VICSSO, Gil

Freeman, deputy principal of Brunswick East High school, Lyn Moon from VFSSPC, and Joan Kirner, MLC. Whatever changes may be made, and whatever new criteria are introduced, the HSC will always be competitive and, to quote the new VISE chairman, 'stress ridden'.[34] On 20 August, 1984, VISE recommended to Mr Fordham that the complete abolition of external exams, and replacement by 'moderated' assessment, should become effective by 1990.

Tertiary institutions realise the significance of faculty pre-requisites and of changes in curriculum, and of the level of difficulty in content and examination/assessment. On the other hand, Freeman speaks of 'many excellent school-based courses currently in the HSC year program' and 'the reluctance or inability of many tertiary authorities to accept these recommendations'.[35] In 1985, Melbourne University is to introduce, for a three year trial, a scheme providing 200 places for students who would not gain entry in the usual way. Various factors will be considered: school assessments; documented work experience; the age, sex and geographic location of the applicant.[36]

## THE BLACKBURN REPORT

A further major change was suggested in the April, 1984 *Ministerial Review of Compulsory Schooling* Discussion Paper of the committee chaired by Jean Blackburn. While seeing the possibility of 'partial restructuring' through the collaboration of networks/clusters of schools, in association with a TAFE college (5.9), the committee listed the limitations of 'a piecemeal approach', of student travel, of constraints on credentialling from localised arrangements, etc. The key proposal was the formation of 'community colleges' for Year 11 and 12 students to prepare them for life and work. A more diversified curriculum would include common elements and optional units centred on vocational areas and prerequisites for tertiary studies. 'The study of society should be pursued in some form by all... It could relate to units centred on aspects of economic and social history including the study of households, of applied science and technology, of sociology and politics. Its basis would thus be academic with a difference' (3.16, 3.18). Credentials would represent completion of a specified number of units spread over the two years. A college would be set, desirably, among a 'cluster' of nearby high schools which would take students to Year 10.[37]

The committee considered 'that, after Year 10, curricular content, learning modes and the ways students are treated should reflect the fact that they are preparing to move as adult citizens into a democratic society' (5.10; 5.14, 6.1). It also looked forward to 'all-age comprehensive community colleges' which 'should not be restricted to young people' (5.21, 5.22). Such a development would make Year 11 students juniors in an adult community, separating them from a school environment where they should be assuming responsibility.

Bremer has noted: 'The social effects of the schools are only now beginning to be realised... we need to do some serious soul-searching when children are developed into a separate social category, with an interest of their own, different from that of their families...'[38] Maslen, who has a profound knowledge of the Victorian State school system, is concerned about the social and educational impact of the separation of younger and older secondary students.[39] In a draft response to the report, the VSTA rejected the concept of separate colleges on various grounds, viz., junior secondary schools were seen as 'inferior and second rate'; any transition, cf. primary/secondary, was 'bad'; there was lack of clarity as to responsibility for administration of the 'colleges' and for representation of their teachers.[40]

If the aim is to develop maturity in young people in a pre-tertiary setting, it is time for incorporation of a Department of Religion to offer them electives: scripture as an introduction to Judaism and Christianity, the place of Israel, surrounded by the ancient civilisations of Sumeria, Egypt, Phoenicia, Assyria, Persia, Greece, and Rome, the history of Christendom, and a study of other religions: Islam, the culture of Hinduism, the moral tenets of Buddhism, and the philosophy of Confucius. These courses meet the requirements of the 'Ministerial Review' which desires 'an overall pattern (which) would ensure that major areas of the culture were pursued in some form by all' (3.15).

I see no reason why the development of mathematics, technology, science, literature and the arts cannot be associated closely with courses of the type cited, thus avoiding a 'mere proliferation of subjects without an overall rationale'. This integration would be better suited to adolescents than too much concentration on 'the history, philosophy, and applications of science' (3.15). Applications yes, but I cannot see benefit, let alone understanding, coming from treatment of the history of Chemistry's phlogiston theory or of Aristotleian Physics; nor could one offer any meaningful course in the philosophy of science unless it was accompanied by a study of relevant disciplines in depth.

## CONCLUSION

P. Fensham, dean of the School of Education, Monash University and with children in State schools, considered (in 1982), there is a 'general sense of impending gloom and anxiety'.[41] T. Vine, in a series of 1984 Sun articles, claimed that 'the consensus of opinion among the people working within Victoria's education system is that the whole system is in a mess'.[42] J. Young, president of the VTU, responded: 'While several disenchanted people working in the system may agree, the facts are that a large number of people are happily getting on with the job.' Nevertheless, Young stated: 'Vine's "headmaster" is quoted as saying that teacher stress is down. It is my belief that the opposite is the case.'[43]

When Commander P. Bennett, of the Victorian Police Force, commented on the relation between 'undisciplined behaviour' and crime, and advocated occasional use of the strap, he obtained support from teachers at North Essendon State Primary School. They considered that 'the academics who sit in their ivory towers are not working in the classroom'.[44] All would agree that to impose punishment of any sort is a distressing process, but the main point in the debate is the lack of effective procedures to cope with situations that arise.[45]

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In December, 1980, the NSW Industrial Commission admitted in a 'work value' case that increased demands had been placed on teachers: school-based making of curricula; disciplinary problems; student peer group scheming, including accusations of sexual assault; critical parent attitudes; and threats of litigation arising from alleged errors in career advice, syllabus content, internal assessment, or accidents during the supervision of pupils. In times of difficulty and crisis, the teacher is often left to face the situation - not always of his/her making - alone. Such a teacher would value the little eleven-year-old girl in England who 'liked her new school because discipline was allowed'.

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G. Tickell, cf. p. 282, ref 3, provides a summing-up:

*And as parenting becomes more challenging, as the golden rules are tarnished and broken, as society becomes more complex, more fragmented, we look to schools to provide the discipline which we find increasingly difficult to maintain and to reinforce the values and attitudes which the society around us seems to erode. We hand over more and more of our responsibility to the teachers - and we feel both relieved and guilty about it. So they had better not let us down. They had better not turn out to be human, to be fallible... It is time for all of us to call a halt to the cargo-cult view of schooling, to the naive belief that schools can produce quick and sure solutions to complex and deep-seated problems.*

# 27 *Victorian Governments and the non-government sector*

## LIBERAL GOVERNMENTS

The Preface to this monograph refers to the funding policies during 1974 and 1975 of the Liberal Government led by Mr (now Sir Richard) Hamer. This Government did not honour an agreement with the McMahon Commonwealth Government (Mr Fraser was then its Minister for Education) to set the State grant at 20% of costs per pupil in Victorian Government schools. The full story has not yet been told. [1]

In 1976, representations from Margaret Gartland, and in a secondary role by the writer, led to the grants being increased by 60% in current terms. From 1976, these grants were maintained at 20% of Victorian government school per pupil costs. These costs were determined by the Treasury and the degree of openness and comprehensiveness of its calculations is referred to in many parts of the present monograph. In 1979, it was agreed that the percentage should rise by 1% per annum, reaching 25% by 1984. The Liberal Governments of Mr Hamer (to 1981) and Mr Thompson (to 1982) adhered to this commitment, except for 1982 when the increase was a half per cent. When the Cain Government took office in 1982, the figure for all school pupils had risen to 23%.

## CONSULTATION WITH LIBERAL GOVERNMENTS

During this period the relations between the Liberal Government and the non-government sector were increasingly cordial and helpful to parents with children in these schools. (The National Party policies, which in the late 1960s were not far from a Labor viewpoint, steadily moved into general harmony with Liberal decisions.)

The VPC had regular access to Mr Hamer as Premier/Treasurer, and Mr Thompson as Minister of Education. The latter brought considerable expertise to his portfolio and was always attentive and open in discussing technical questions regarding calculation of costs - even though neither he nor his advisers could always make definitive statements on Treasury practices! When Mr Thompson became Premier in 1981, the new Minister of Education, Mr Hunt, was also co-operative.

The VPC's representations to Government authorities were always presented as formal written submissions. The reports of per pupil expenditure in State schools, that appeared in the Victorian Hansard during 1965-80, originated in VPC questions that were raised in the Legislative Assembly by co-operative members of Parliament: Messrs Moss (NP), Dixon (Lib), Ross-Edwards (NP). It is worth noting that these questions ensured the release of Victorian data at a time when the Australian Education Council was keeping State expenditures 'secret'. Neither space nor purpose permit this monograph to supply/analyse the considerable financial detail available on Victorian schooling from 1965 to 1982.

The activity of both AISV and CEOV at the State level increased during 1979. As discussed in Chapter 6, the CEOV has never regarded the VPC as a colleague in defence of Catholic school interests. However, until 1982, both bodies had the same position on grants from the Victorian Government, viz., a per capita grant , appropriate to the primary and secondary levels, to all pupils, with a steady rise in value from 20% to 25% of average government school costs.

## LABOR IN POWER

The Victorian Labor Party's election policies were based on a 'needs' policy in which, it was promised, the total moneys flowing to the non-government sector would be kept steady in real terms, but there would be a redistribution from 'wealthy' to 'needy' schools. The CEO, Melbourne, through its spokesman, Mr V. Faulkner, stated that the policy was consistent with the Office's appreciation; this appraisal was the exact opposite of the recommendation of Fr Martin in 1979, when he wrote that the Catholic authorities wanted no change in the system by which all schools received the same per pupil grants from the State, 'leaving the application of needs basis to Federal funding through the Schools Commission'. See Chapter 5.

According to T. Pankhurst (1982), the Labor policy avoided 'the divisive State aid issue, while consolidating the Catholic vote, uncertain since the demise of the DLP'.[2] In commenting on the 1982-83 Federal budget allocations, Mr Fordham stated that he recognised the need for more help for the poorer Catholic schools, 'but in no way should this be at the expense of the State school sector'.[3]

When the Labor Party won the election in April, 1982, the Deputy Premier, Mr R. Fordham, became Minister of Education. He immediately established a State Board of Education, and, on 16 June, 1983, a Bill regularised its operation and recognised it as a statutory body. The chairman was Dr K.R. McKinnon; the Board consisted of two full-time members - G. Tickell, then president of the ATF, and Mrs Pat Reeve, then president of VFSSPC - and 11 part-time members.

In moving the second reading of the Bill on 27 May, 1983, Mr Fordham said inter alia: 'No matter affecting the future of primary and secondary education in Victoria is outside the purview of the State Board of Education and hence advice can be expected on a wide range of topics and issues.'[4] These far-reaching terms of reference exceeded those set for the parallel NSW Commission in its relevant act, which recognises the special position of the non-government schools.

When writing to principals of non-government schools on 8 February, 1982, prior to the election, Mr Fordham stated: 'What I have given is an assurance that a Labor Government will consult with all relevant organisations affected by any proposed changes in our education system.' On 16 August, 1983, Mr Cain stated his policy on 'consultation': '...The Government will listen to all points of view and all interested groups. There is no need for those persons to seek access to the Government or its Ministers through the intervention of a third party which believes it has a God-given right to provide that access...'[5] This has not been the experience of those 'interested' in or professionally responsible for the welfare of the 228,000 children in non-government schools. An AISV statement of 17 August, 1983, maintained that 'the Victorian Government prides itself on such processes; yet, on this issue both it and the State Board have been singularly culpable'.

## THE REPORT OF THE STATE BOARD

On 8 March, 1983, the Minister requested that the Board provide 'advice on the redistribution of funds [for the non-government sector] on a basis of need within existing levels of the State Budget which could be applied to the 1983-84 financial year'. The Board's July, 1983 report to the Minister: *Grants to non-government schools for 1984 and 1985* was produced by a body which contained only two representatives of the non-government sector: Dr Hugh Batten, chairman of AISV, and Fr Tom Doyle, director of CEOV. There were two State school teacher union representatives and one State school parent representative, but no one to speak or vote for teachers or parents in non-government schools.

Mr Fordham had stated that the total cost of the capitation grants (1983 price levels) was $114 m. (s 1.1); or $114.626 m. according to departmental estimates (s. 2.8). The Board admitted that 'the meaning of the term "need" as the basis of a funding scheme is controversial... Any mechanisms for identifying and assessing "need" are difficult to make proof against anomalies' (s. 2.1). Nevertheless, it made detailed recommendations extending them into calendar year 1985. This did not seem to be the Minister's intention as he sought advice of 'a more fundamental nature on the needs concept...by mid 1984' (s. 1.1).

SRRI ratings of the Commonwealth Schools Commission were used as a criterion, even though these were supposed to be confidential to it. Schools with SRRI of 51 and above were to 'have their per student grants reduced on a sliding scale so that those in the highest categories receive the lowest grants' (s. 3.6). 'Schools with private input resources below 51 which can establish a need, beyond that able to be met from their own reasonable efforts, may make submissions to the Committee for allocations of a needs grant... The Committee will first assess whether the schools can reasonably meet the need itself, that is it should not fund schools for unwillingness to make appropriate private input' (s. 3.8).

While the undistributed savings (1984) available by deprivation of schools above SRRI 52 were $10.646 m. (1983 prices), the recommended sum for 'needy' schools was $5.046 m. An attempt was made to justify the reduction by the following diversions: 'augmentation of shared student services' ($2 m.); funds for additional enrolments ($2.5 m.); funding of schools for the blind 'which have not had a firm system of support' ($0.6 m.); administration (!) of the needs system ($0.2 m.). According to Mr Jona, 'half the money being creamed off Victoria's so called wealthy schools is being redirected to routine services and is not going to other private schools as promised.'[6]

The Board believed that 'diversions able to be made for debt servicing and other purposes should be more limited than is allowed by the Schools Commission... For 1985 the Board will investigate the possibility of developing mechanisms for discounting recurrent grants to schools with physical resources markedly exceeding those that would normally be provided for government schools' (s. 3.10).

The Report stated: 'Within the 635 non-government schools (excluding special schools) in Victoria accepted for funding in 1982, there were approximately 120,000 primary students, and 106,000 secondary students.' (s. 2.9). As a commentary, I note that 81.9% of the primary children (= 98,280) and 60.4% of the secondary pupils (= 64,024) were in schools with SRRIs below 30. If $5,046,000 had been distributed equally among these 162,304 students, each would have received $31 (in 1983 prices). This would have raised the grant from $374 to $405 for a primary school child, comparing with the cost of $1,627 in a State school; from $611 to $642 for a secondary school pupil comparing with $2,657 for his counterpart in a State school. These costs (1983) are cited in s. 2.8 of the Report, and Mr Fordham has given figures (see Chapter 19) suggesting that they are under-estimated. What is obvious is the 'discrimination gap' existing between Government funding of the two sectors.

Other aspects of the Board's report raised the 'broad range of public support from the State Government' (s. 1.4), the 'tensions' associated with decline in overall enrolments and non-government school enrolment and building (s. 1.7), the capacity of parents to pay fees, an assessment which might be in contrast with the resources schools are actually providing for themselves' (s. 2.3).

### *Critique*

The most important statement in the report is that 'the Government rejected as its long term approach any commitment to a policy of basic grant plus needs element, implying that no school is automatically entitled to a per capita grant and that any grant would have to be justified on the basis of need' (s. 2.5). Three comments may be made. All government school pupils receive basic grants irrespective of the 'needs' of their families; the educational 'need/needs' of families in the non-government sector has never been examined in depth; the 'needs' allocation of $5.046 m. for the whole of this sector is not a serious attempt to help low resources schools/low income families in this sector.[7]

## THE STATE BOARD AND THE COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Reference has been made elsewhere in this monograph (Chapters 3, 23 and 28) to the concept of 'supported' or 'maintained' schools. Government school teacher unions have always welcomed the Schools Commission's suggestion, in its June, 1975 report, for 'supported' schools. For example, the annual general meeting (July, 1978) of the VSTA resolved that schools opt for 'supported' or 'non-supported' status.

The latter were to receive no State aid. In 1979, an identical policy, under the title of 'community' schools, was presented by Alan Marriage at the ATF's 1979 annual conference. He stated: 'Non-government schools could stay out of the community system if they wished. But they would no longer receive government funds and would have to be run solely on tuition fees.'

S. 3. 11(c) of the Board's report is consistent with the appreciation of the ATF. This section stated: ' The Board believes that it would be appropriate for the Government to capitalise on the co-operation of non-government schools and make explicit that they are expected to...either establish or make acceptable progress towards a governing Council or Board which has...some 'outside' co-opted or appointed members.'

## REACTION OF THE CECV/CEOV

Dr K.R. McKinnon, the chairman of the Board, stated in a covering letter to the Minister: 'As might be expected it has not been possible to achieve unanimity among members for all the views and recommendations set out in the paper. Nevertheless, all members of the Board have agreed to forward this advice.' This seems to understate the degree of division and to make it strange that the report was ever forwarded without qualification from Dr Batten and Fr Doyle. Mr P. Annett, deputy director of the CEOV, stated: 'I don't think the Board has the expertise, objectivity or the balance of membership to be able to give objective or realistic advice to the Minister.'[8] According to a CEOV Media Release: 'The document in general is of a tone which would seem to indicate an attitude inimical to non-government schools. The fact that the Board has not seen fit to consult in an effective way with the CEOV concerning the recommendations it has made to the Minister is of major concern. The CEOV is strongly opposed to the recommendations relating to new enrolments in non-government schools. The CEOV would be supportive of any proposal which reasonably balances choice of parents against scarce resources available but the recommendations made do not achieve a reasonable balance.'[9]

The statement also contained criticism of the Minister. Its final paragraph read: 'We note from the Minister's Media Release[10] that he is "conscious of the significance of many of the issues raised in the Board's Report" and that he will carry through discussions with the CEOV and the AISV. It is most regrettable that these discussions did not take place prior to the decision by the Government to accept the recommendations of the Board.'

The first official CEOV release to parish priests and principals was dated 25 August, 1983. It again referred to lack of consultation by the State Board, and lack of consultation by the Minister, prior to his accepting the recommended grant structure for 1984. In 1983, all schools had received $374 per primary pupil and $611 per secondary pupil, and these grants were to be maintained in real terms for students in schools with a SRRI less than 51. Above this figure, the grants were progressively reduced in six stages, so that schools of SRRI 100+ obtained $165 (P) and $260 (S). The director, Fr T. Doyle, addressed himself to various issues: the 'diversion' of $5 m. violated a pre-election guarantee of Mr Cain and Mr Fordham; the State Board did not acknowledge the principle of a basic grant; the cuts in grants to many schools were 'too drastic', and no consideration seemed 'to have been given to the effects on educational programs'; financial clauses aimed at limiting new enrolments were unacceptable; there was no rationale for limiting the use of funds for debt servicing and for assessing capital facilities when determining recurrent grants.

The education authorities of the three country dioceses are part of CEOV, but there was a separate response from the Ballarat Diocesan Education Board, Its chairman, Fr G. Pell, described the report as 'hostile and divisive'. He said that the Catholic community could not accept the abolition of a basic grant for all students. 'If needs are to be the only basis for funding, needs can be defined arbitrarily... The State Board has begun that process.' [11]

In September, 1983, the CECV submitted 'Comments' on the report to the Minister.[12] CECV policy was 'one of a reasonable basic grant and a needs element'. The failure of the State Board to consult was 'incomprehensible'. Government student services were 'available only on a limited basis to children in non-government schools'. Government funded subsidy on borrowings 'is minimal and represents 6.7% of the total annual interest costs and 4.8% of the total annual debt servicing costs in respect of Catholic schools'. The paper contained a strong defence of the CECV's co-operation in co-ordinated planning and a counter-attack on 'serious over-provision of educational facilities' by the Department of Education. The CECV insisted 'that in educational planning the right of parental choice be respected and this Report would seem to disregard this right.' It did not show a professional knowledge of SRRI, of the operation of the Catholic school 'system', or of the structures in place for assessing disadvantage in the non-government sector. 'The Report is an unsophisticated and incompetent document. Many of the proposals made...are outside the brief given the Board by the Minister...'

## THE REACTION OF AISV

The AISV's initial submission to the Government had recognised the 'needs' principle, but subject to two provisos: the retention of a basic grant and attention to the needs of students and families, not schools. The AISV suggested basic grants of '18%' and '15%' for 1984 and 1985 respectively, with 'needs' allocations of '5%' and '8%' in these years. [13]

M.S. Kane, executive officer of AISV, protested: 'It is unfortunate that neither the State Board nor the Victorian Government consulted in any real sense with those who have the expertise... The Victorian Government has accepted in principle a report from a board, the majority of whom are are totally unqualified to talk about non-government schooling.' [14] An AISV statement, released on 17 August, stated: 'There was a brief opportunity for AISV representatives to talk informally with the Chairman and the Board and the two Deputy Chairpersons... no formal agenda or statements were provided.'

## THE VICTORIAN PARENTS' COUNCIL

These protests had not been mounted publicly before the election and at the time of formation of the Board. In fact the CEOV Media Release recognised that the CEOV, in liaison with AISV, had proposed to the Board and the Government that any changes should be gradual. The AISV's submission was expressed in the same terms. In other words both acquiesced in the phasing out of a 'basic grant' at the existing proportional value (23%). The response of CEOV and AISV contrasted with that of the VPC which re-affirmed its funding policy: 'We will oppose any reduction in this basic grant of 23% by the State Government as a denial of human rights'[15] It was unfortunate that there was no joint submission from AISV and CEOV, with the VPC as a contributory signatory. As discussed in Chapters 5 and 6, the unity of 'the non-government school community' was not sufficient for this step.

## MR FORDHAM TAKES A SECOND LOOK

After 9 August, there was substantial consultation with the Government, and Mr Fordham made a number of decisions which he conveyed to the principals of non-government schools in a letter dated 19 September, 1983. He indicated that the grant structure would be as instanced in the Board's report, with the addition of a cost escalation factor of 7.5%. He established a Ministerial Advisory Committee to further consider the issues and to facilitate consultation between himself and non-government schools. There were to be three members: Dr Batten, Mr Kevin Collins (Deputy Director General of Education), and Fr Doyle. The terms of reference of the Ministerial Committee were as follows: the allocation of the balance of funds ($10.646 m. in 1983 dollar terms) available to non-government schools; appropriate procedures for the planning and financing of new enrolments; monitoring of the impact of the 1984 funding arrangements, with consideration to the effect of funding proposals for 1985; and other related issues.

The Ministerial Committee recommended and the Government accepted that no school/pupil should lose in real terms in 1985. Within 72 hours of the release of the Federal guidelines, the Victorian Government announced its decision for 1985. Funds for non-government schools, in real terms, were to increase from the $122.2 m., provided in 1984, to $124.6 m. in 1985. The extra $2.4 m. provided for expected increased enrolments in the coming year. If one allows for 5.5% inflation, the total amount was $131 m. in current (1985) terms. The State Government funding of non-government schools for 1985 follows the new Commonwealth 12-tier arrangements. Individual non-systemic schools and the systemic group were placed in the same category for State Government funding as for Commonwealth funding. The State grant (1985) for pupils in schools of the highest resource (Category 1(a)) has been maintained in real terms at $177 (P) and $279 (S), the 1984 figures. The grant for pupils in schools of the lowest resource (Category 12) has moved from $402 to $421 (P), $657 to $676 (S). The actual grants, indexed for inflation, are 5.5.% higher. An increase in real terms starts with 0.5% at Category 4 and reaches 4.7% at Category 12.

In addition, the Government accepted the advice of the Committee concerning the disposition of the residue of funds available in 1984. After consultation with AISV, CECV, and Jewish Day Schools, the Committee is to make recommendations as to allocations. This distribution will be a one-off operation pertaining to 1984 only; in 1985, funds will be distributed according to the categorisation described.

The State Board has retained its interest in the funding of non-government schools. It has asked 'its Resource Needs Standing Committee to work out a framework for short position papers'. These were to provide 'basic data on such relevant topics as the various forms of funding of schools in Victoria, both government and non-government.'[16] It has been reported in the press that the State Board recommended that, for 1985, more than $10 m. be cut from grants to 'wealthier private schools'. Mr Fordham did not accept the recommendation because of 'the difficulty that private schools found themselves in'.[17]

## THE PROBLEM OF EQUITY

In launching its campaign prior to the 1984-85 State Budget, the Teachers' Federation of Victoria used the slogan: 'Doesn't every kid deserve the same chance? Increase funds to government schools'.[18] The analysis of this statement involves an accurate knowledge of the relative resource/money inputs into a spectrum of State and non-government schools. The average 'discrimination gap' is revealed in current terms in the following estimates.

GOVERNMENT RECURRENT FUNDING PER VICTORIAN PUPIL

| | Non-government | | | Government | Gap |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Federal<br>$ | State<br>$ | Total<br>$ | $ | $ |
| PRIMARY | | | | | |
| Minimum | | | | | |
| 1983 | 342 | 374 | 716 | 1813 | 1097 |
| 1984 | 270 | 177 | 447 | 1950 | 1503 |
| 1985 | 285 | 187 | 472 | 2057 | 1585 |
| Maximum | | | | | |
| 1983 | 684 | 374 | 1058 | 1813 | 755 |
| 1984 | 741 | 402 | 1143 | 1950 | 807 |
| 1985 | 803 | 444 | 1247 | 2057 | 810 |
| SECONDARY | | | | | |
| Minimum | | | | | |
| 1983 | 543 | 611 | 1154 | 2959 | 1805 |
| 1984 | 428 | 279 | 707 | 3180 | 2473 |
| 1985 | 452 | 294 | 746 | 3360 | 2614 |
| Maximum | | | | | |
| 1983 | 1086 | 611 | 1697 | 2959 | 1262 |
| 1984 | 1177 | 657 | 1834 | 3180 | 1346 |
| 1985 | 1267 | 713 | 1980 | 3360 | 1380 |

From VPC 'Newsletter', 23, no.4, September, 1984.

*For Government school costs, see the statement of Mr Fordham, quoted in full in Chapter 19. Estimates have been indexed for inflation, but have no betterment factor. As stated throughout the text, it is considered that the Treasury figures under-estimate real costs. For example, the Victorian Budget 1984-85, released in September, 1984, omits reference to debt charges, workers' compensation, insurance, and employer's contribution to superannuation. The latter factor is referred to again in Chapter 29. Some people would regard these as 'hidden' costs. They are unestimated, not 'hidden', costs and have to be considered by non-government school authorities when they are costing their expenditures and commitments. The omission of these items from the Budget papers and the failure of the Victorian State Government to release information for public scrutiny means that it is not following acceptable procedures with regard to Accountability.*

The table set out below is also relevant.

STATE GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURES ON NON-GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS
State data are based on 'Appropriation (1984-85, No. 1)'

| Program 288 | 1983-84 payments, $m. | 1984-85 estimate, $m. |
|---|---|---|
| Grants and expenses | 116.8 | 124.7 |
| Student travel | 5.2 | 1.9 |
| Education allowances | 10.7 | 10.9 |
| Maintenance allowances | 0.6 | 0.7 |
| Interest subsidies | 1.5 | 1.5 |
| | ----- | ----- |
| Total State | 134.8 | 139.7 |
| Commonwealth | 219.0 | 235.9 |
| | ----- | ----- |
| | 353.8 | 374.6 |
| | ---- | ---- |
| Total Victorian expenditure on schooling and TAFE | 2414.8 | 2648.5 |
| % for non-government schooling | 14.7 | 14.1 |

## REFERENCES

1. The story of the 1974 and 1975 grants has, however, been descibed in adequate detail by Mortensen (1977), p. 146. It was not the first, or the last, time that a State Government had used an increase in Federal funding to the non-government sector as a pretext for renegging on a previous promise. On 25 October, 1970, the Premier of Tasmania, Mr W.A. Bethune, stated that his Government felt justified in not honouring its promises to increase per capita grants because the situation of Tasmanian schools had substantially changed with the advent of Commonwealth aid; see W.T. Southerwood (1983), pp. 100-101 citing The Standard, 30 October, 1970; also, The Advocate, 12 August, 1976.

2. Pankhurst, T. 'ALP out to woo Catholics with education policy', The Australian, 18 February, 1982.

3. Green, Sue. 'School fund levels not fair: Govt', The Age, 22 June, 1982.

4. Fordham, R. PD, State Hansard, 27 May, 1983, pp. 4627-8.

5. Cain, J. PD, State Hansard, 16 August, 1983, p. 262.

6. The Herald. '"Con" in school cuts, says Jona', 25 August, 1983.

7. T. Duggan ('A word for private schools', The Age, 16 July, 1983) wrote with some understanding of the problems, and this earned him an initially unfavourable response when he met with the full-time commissioners of the Board,; see 'State aid:the Board fights back', 20 August, 1983.

8. Fih, Barbara. 'Six schools to lose $3 m. aid', The Age, 11 August, 1983.

9. CEOV. Media Release. 'Statement from the CEOV re State Board of Education funding proposals for non-government schools', 9 August, 1983. A summary appeared in The Advocate, 18 August, 1983.

10. Government Media Unit. 'Minister releases recommendations on grants to non-government schools', 9 August, 1983.

11. Gillies, M. The Herald, 23 August, 1983. He also reported (6 October, 1983) that the Anglican Archbishop of Melbourne, Robert Dann, called a meeting of 25 schools within his jurisdiction, and wrote to mr Cain expressing their concern.

12. CECV. 'Report on State Board of Education: "Grants to non-government schools for 1984-85"', September, 1983.

13. Gillies, M. 'Change student aid to private schools', The Herald, 27 July, 1983; The Sun, 'Private schools put $ plan', 28 July, 1983; Trudi McIntosh, 'Private schools "not just for rich" ', The Australian, 28 July, 1983.

14. Kane, M.S. The Age, 16 August, 1983.

15. VPC. 'Meeting with Hon R. Fordham', 8 August, 1983.

16. Reports of the State Board of Education meetings, 5 June, 9-10 July, 14 August, 1984. 'The Board decided that it would advise the Minister that the matter of funding levels should remain a political one until some more open possibilities as to its future were indicated by the Minister to the Board' (11 Sept., 1984).

17. Fih, Barbara and S. Clarke. 'Rich schools keep grants despite advice to State', The Age, 18 August, 1984.

18. Grutzner, Anna. 'Teachers launch campaign', The Herald, 28 August, 1984.

## THE ANDERSON REPORT

In 1983, the debate on the building of Radford College, a proposed new Anglican school in Canberra, came to a head. On 19 April, 1983 Senator Susan Ryan announced the composition of a committee, under the chairmanship of Dr Don Anderson of the ANU, 'to review plans for the development of Radford College and to assess the likely impact ... on government schools in the context of the Government's commitment to equal educational opportunities for all Australian children and the maintenance and development of comprehensive, high quality government school systems'. [1]

The Report was released by the Minister on 21 July, 1983. [2] It indicated that the proposal for establishment of the College had 'provoked a bitter and divisive public controversy that has been contrary to the welfare of education in the ACT'. [3] The bitterness led to harassment of the building project - which had the approval and a grant from the former Government - by teacher unions, State school parents, and the ACT Trades and Labour Council.

Inter alia, the *Summary Report: 'Schools for ACT: how public? how private?'* stated: 'We have chosen not to use the terms "government school" and "non-government school" in this report. We are aware that the terms we have chosen to use "public school" and "private school" are not free of difficulties' (p. vi). [4]

In fact, the latter terms are, as Anderson states in M 52/83, 'inaccurate'. If so, is it desirable to change well-established language, fully supported by existing patterns of administration, autonomy, and relationship? Terms such as 'private' have overtones of profit-making and an exclusiveness, generated by other causes than lack of equity in the distribution of 'public' moneys and the necessity for charging of fees. This is not to deny that 'private' is a long-established term in the press, but is this to be the criteria?

One accusation in the building of (the new) Radford College was the overall cost-effectiveness of building a new school when there were declining enrolments in government schools. The terms used in the 'Summary' were 'efficiency in the use of public resources' (p. 3), 'efficiency in the use of public funds' (p. 5). 'What is the cost to other schools and to the community of providing additional capital facilities? What are the economic consequences of accelerating the rate of decline of enrolments in existing schools?' (p. 5).

The Committee assessed 'the impact of a new school in a developed area so that the total economic costs can be weighed against other benefits and costs. The claim that students in private schools save the Government money was shown not to hold in this case' (p. 6). 'We have concluded that, taking into account the existing provisions for schools in the north of Canberra and the likely population trends, the decision to build Radford College was in economic terms expensive and in demographic terms unnecessary' (p. 17).

The statement about 'claim' for savings as a result of 'the dual system of government funded public and private schools' (M 52/83) seems an understatement; surely, it is a fact. However, it is more important to stress the unbalanced character of the argument by pointing to two facts cited in the 'Summary':

> 'We considered it unfortunate that early attempts to seek accommodation in an existing public school building were not successful' (p. 7).
>
> 'At about the same time a public school in the region, Watson High, was recommended for closure because of declining enrolments There was heated public controversy over the school and industrial action by the Teachers' Federation and the Trades and Labour Council.' [5]

The same circumstances frustrated the leasing by Moriah College, an independent Jewish school, of an allegedly redundant government school, Dover Heights High School in Sydney's eastern suburbs. The NSW Teachers' Federation organised picket lines and 'sit-ins'; it encouraged the students of the school to take part in them. The union's president, Max Taylor, conceded that there could be 'some ugly scenes'. Eventually, the Premier, Mr Wran, gave way. [6] At the same time, there was protest, from the Manly-Warringah Teachers' Association at the establishment of Peninsular Anglican Boys' School at Warriewood in Sydney. [7]

The concern of interest groups for the State school system is understandable. They find current evidence for slow but steady erosion in numbers of students proportionate to non-government schools; they are concerned at criticism which often neglects the social conditions that are influencing educational outcomes; they are anxious to ensure that 'the quality of education in schools is not impaired through the effects, both direct and indirect, of new schools' (p. 5; cf. p. 16); they point to 'the effect of reduced resources on the morale of staff and on curriculum offerings' (p. 6); they fear possible job loss and lack of scope for advancement. It is not as if ACT government schools are run-down; most non-government schools cannot compete with their resources. And as the Anderson Committee states: '... we note the existence in the region of the College (Radford) of ACT secondary colleges, which have a national reputation for their educational achievements' (p. 17).

These issues deserve close attention. However, it is significant that, where the closure of government schools is considered necessary by the proper authorities, this can be circumvented by the use of power and threat. On the other hand, the closure of an insolvent non-government school, not viable because of declining enrolments, is taken as a fact of life, even welcomed in some quarters; the equal distress of parents is of little moment.

The Conclusion to the 'Summary' states: 'In the matter of what became popularly known as 'the third Anglican school', philosophical issues of school funding have been given substance and reality' (p. 16). These issues have been present in practically every financial decision made over the past decade. The 'Summary' adds nothing by way of scholarly treatment. The Committee has much to say on the factors that limit choice of parents and on the lack of cost-effectiveness of the Radford College plan, but nothing to say about the 'unfortunate' circumstances that prevented use of an 'existing public school building' (p. 7). [8] It would appear that the bitterness of 'interest' groups stood in the way and, as in Sydney, this was accompanied by picketing.

The possibility of resolution, acceptable on economic grounds, was rejected without consideration to those vitally concerned, namely the parents of the region. What would have been the response if all parents of secondary school-age children had the opportunity for a secret vote on their wishes and as to whether they were already met: government or non-government school; type (religious affiliation, Christian, but not denominational, etc.)? Would they have chosen a non-government school if they had to pay fees and, if so, what level would they accept; what hardship, if any, would this involve?

The same point has been made by Mr Busch, President of Parents and Friends of ACT Schools. He stated: 'With falling enrolments in government schools it is 'de facto' integration to coerce children to remain in government schools to keep seats warm when some parents' real choice for their children is education in non-government schools.' [9] Mr Busch said his association called on the Minister to state that she would withdraw those elements in her recent guidelines which contained 'the seeds of integration'. [10]

My critique might imply surprise that Senator Ryan stated that 'the Committee made 27 recommendations, all of which were unanimous'. She continued: 'Some misconceptions have arisen as a result of the Report, however. Concerning the issue of integration, which was raised in the Committee's Report, I would like to make it clear that this Government has no intention of pursuing a policy of integrating non-government schools with government schools.' [11]

## INTEGRATION

This is the first mention of 'integration', and some explanation is needed. It is ironic that, with all the modern courses in linguistics, not to speak of philosophical studies, language has never been used more loosely than today. Recommendations of the Report read:

> The proposed Interim ACT Education Planning Board would initiate early consultations on the feasibility of establishing an integrated public education system in the ACT and should convene a working party ...(R 8)
>
> An ACT Education Planning Board should: be established to promote comprehensive and co-ordinated educational planning in respect of ACT public and private schools (R 5)

> The ACT Education Planning Board should prepare impact studies for all new schools, whether public or private, in order to ensure co-ordinated planning ... (R 11).

While the end result of implementation of R 5, 8 and/or 11 may be the same, the terms of reference and outcomes suggested by integration / co-ordination are quite different.

Co-ordination is essential. As *Recommendations for 1984* (2.15) states: 'It (the Commission) believes there is a strong case for Planning and Finance Committees ensuring that a school authority seeking funds for the construction of a new school undertakes appropriate consultations with government and, where necessary, other non-government school authorities to ascertain the effects of a proposed new school on existing schools.' There is an even stronger case for a 'democratic' government ascertaining parent wishes before it builds a government school which may not be wanted on the scale planned, but which then pleads that 'rivals' compete with existing resources.

One might refer to s. 2.12 of the 'Recommendations': '... many non-government school authorities continue to place high priority on the provision of new schools and the extension of existing schools to meet very strong enrolment demands in newly developed suburbs and towns.' The sentence which follows is suspect, viz., 'this priority absorbs a significant proportion of the public funds which might otherwise be available for upgrading purposes'. The reference to 'upgrading' is obscure, but can the non-government school be blamed for providing an education parents want, for seeking a capital grant (in the non-Catholic sector 10 per cent of total building costs; cf. Table F), when public funds have already been expended, without consultation?

Dr McKinnon blames the efforts of the Catholic Church to 'build schools wherever Catholics needed them' for leading to 'a seemingly limitless call by private schools for more public funds'. [12] I have no brief for the Catholic Church building or not building schools, but, if a section of the community want them, and their costs are no more than government schooling, why should they not come into being? As for their limitless call on 'public funds', this is their money, for public use and they are part of the public. We are not dealing with a public utility such as transport. [13]

One might ask, 'What is in a word'? Integration? Co-ordination? The Anderson Committee 'concluded that there is a pressing need to redefine the nature and attributes of public schooling, and to establish the conditions that should properly be applied to the funding of publicly supported schools' (p.12). In this redefinition, the Committee believed it helpful to consider New Zealand, which 'has an integrated public school system which allows for the full recurrent funding of private schools which elect, on a voluntary basis, to be integrated into the public school system.' [14]

## *New Zealand*

In choosing England and New Zealand as prototypes for schemes of 'integration', the Committee chose countries which supported its line of reasoning.

In considering New Zealand, the Committee stated that the main advantage of the integration arrangements (under the 1975 Private Schools Conditional Integration Act no. 129) was that 'their full operating costs are met while their special character is guaranteed' (Volume 1, 9.27).

The Anderson Committee in no way provided an adequate critique in its sections 9.22 to 9.28. A survey of the current situation by Peter Annett and Sister Marie Therese Harold of CEOV offers a perspective which is consistent, with the misgivings at least, of many Catholic educationalists in New Zealand. [15]

> 'The Catholic population of New Zealand is about 14% and the Catholic school proportion of school enrolments is about 9% (27% and 22% respectively in Victoria). Catholic schools in the mid 1970s were in a state of bankruptcy. The initial overtures towards integration came from the Catholic authorities.' The cost of bringing school buildings up to the building code - [$70 m.], a heavy financial burden on the Catholic community - is probably of less concern in the long-term than two other factors: maintenance of special character made difficult by lack of control over staffing arrangements. 'The real effects of integration will be better judged in 5 or 10 years hence, but my firm prediction would be that the Catholic school will have lost much of its distinctive character.'
>
> (*Annett*)

> 'One major concern for the Religious Orders is the qualification of their members. Many were so busy "keeping" the schools going with very little money, so they could not afford the time or finance to update the qualifications of their members. There are instances where religious cannot find employment within their own schools ... Many, particularly in the women's congregations, are looking for alternative forms of apostolate ... Integration has taken away from the Religious Congregations most of the autonomy they had in relation to staffing their schools ... the number of the non-Catholics in the system is very high, and many of these are being asked to teach religion ... My own prediction is that unless the lay teachers obtain suitable Religious Education training, particularly if they are to hold positions as Principals and Directors of Religious Studies, there will be only one system in New Zealand within a few years.' (*Harold*)

The key flaw in the New Zealand scheme is the payment of teachers in non-government schools by the Department. It is inevitably associated with a major role in selection of staff according to departmental criteria and decision.

In Australia, during the 1960s, B.A. Santamaria was one of the few who saw clearly the implications of funding in relation to autonomy. We can now see the advantage of per capita funding of the child, paid to the school, on behalf of the parents to help to defray fees. The 'needs' component is still a per pupil component, but it is assessed from a school's resources. Its rationale lies in the fact that resources, generally but not invariably, correlate with the capacity of the school's spectrum of parents to pay.

This distribution of needs is, however, centred on the school rather than the individual parent, and as such leads to anomalies and inequities. Nevertheless, one thing is clear. Australia has been wise or lucky in deciding against payment of teachers.

## THE PUBLIC RESPONSE IN CANBERRA

The response to the Federal cuts in the per pupil fundings to many non-Catholic schools in the ACT and to the report of the Anderson Committee was two meetings in which all non-government schools/systems in the ACT passed various resolutions. They protested at the reduction in fundings, demanded the restoration of the percentage link between per capita grants to non-government school pupils and the costs of educating pupils in government schools for 1984 and future years, and rejected the new procedures for funding new non-government schools in developed areas.

The first meeting on 16 August was organised, within six days, at the Albert Hall; it attracted 700 people.[16] 900 attended the second meeting at St Francis Xavier High School.[17] An editorial in *The Canberra Times* stated that 'whatever else it might do, the Anderson report, by treating Radford College as a case study on which to erect the integration argument, has shown the non-government schools the commonality of their interests.'[18] The comment - ten years after Karmel - was significant. However, it was clear that the new-found unity also involved the gathering together of the strength necessary to protect the legitimate interests of the non-government school community. This time there was no division among Catholics; there was no acquiescence, with mild, ineffective protest, from non-Catholics on the 'hit-list'.

Senator Ryan said that she desired and welcomed public discussion: 'I was waiting for public debate before I made a detailed response.'[18] However, she was obviously surprised at the strength of the reaction: 'I think it is pretty amazing that an independent committee brings down a report for public discussion and people start organising hysterical campaigns.'[19] What she failed to realise was stated by Senator Baume, 'of course people in the ACT were concerned, of course they're alarmed', he said. 'They don't trust this Government in terms of its approach to non-government schools.'[20]

### *Teacher Federation Policies*

The State School Teacher Federations welcomed the Schools Commission suggestion for 'supported' schools. In 1978, the VSTA resolved that schools opt for 'non-supported' or 'supported' status. The former were to receive no State Aid. An identical policy, under the title of 'community' schools was presented by Alan Marriage during the Federation's January, 1979, Annual Council. He stated: 'Non-government schools could stay out of the community system if they wished. But they would no longer receive government funds and would have to be run solely on tuition fees.'

These policies were aimed at attracting Catholic schools particularly. As Marriage said: 'I think a large number of private schools - particularly in the Catholic system - would go along with the idea.' However, Fr John Williams said that Catholic schools would welcome greater government aid, but not at the expense of losing control of their character. He was supported by Fr Martin, who said that any proposal would have to satisfy Catholic school authorities in respect to access and enrolment policy, curriculum, staffing and governance. 'Catholics would wish to preserve at all costs the particular identity of the Catholic school.' 21

## NON-GOVERNMENT SCHOOL RESPONSES

### *The Catholic Education Office, Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn: 'Submission on the Report of the Committee of Review into the impact of Radford College'.*

It supported the funding of Radford College.

It called the terms of reference of the Review Committee 'unnecessarily broad and inappropriately interpreted' and 'its membership unrepresentative to the extent that the Committee discussed and made recommendations relating to education generally in the ACT and, by implication, Australia as a whole'.

It stated that parents have a basic right to choose the kind of education 'which reflects and sustains the values and world view they wish to pass on to their children'. The submission said that 'this right is illusory unless public funding is made available for the education of all children'.

It rejected integration of non-government with government schools as 'completely unacceptable'.

It rejected the proposed ACT Education Planning Board as 'an unnecessary bureaucratic overstructure which will add to, rather than diminish, planning complexity and inefficiency'. However, the CEO welcomed 'consultation on how to further promote co-ordinated educational planning for ACT government and non-government schools'.

*Board of Radford College:*

1. The Anderson Report stated: 'The decision to build Radford College was, in economic terms, expensive and in demographic terms unnecessary' (Volume 1, 11.11). It argued that the building would result in a net cost to the community; see 5.14 to 5.28. This conclusion was based on a number of assumptions:

* $3 m. as an estimate of the land value, even though this item had not been quoted previously in the costing of either ACT schools on public buildings (5.21) and despite 'difficulties applying economic values to a particular education development'; see 5.20 and Volume 2: Appendix L, pp. 75-80.
* Different treatment of data for teachers' superannuation, ACT Schools Authority 'services', and debt servicing.

In respect to the demographic argument, the background report of the Committee stated:

* Continuing residential development should ensure that the numbers of high school students residing in Belconnen is above the specified minimum, and Radford College is most unlikely to attract only students who would otherwise have gone to a government school (p. 58).
* Hawker and Copland Colleges are likely to obtain adequate enrolments well into the 1990s, and Dickson College should benefit from a continuing surplus of...students in Belconnen (p. 60).

I note a sentence in a letter dated 24 June, 1983, from B.M. Browning of the National Capital Development Commission:

> When non-government schools come on line some years after nearby neighbourhood government schools open, latter enrolments fall and this reduces the optimum utilisation of schools serving a particular catchment. If both system schools were to come on line together, the optimum utilisation of the schools would extend ...

Constant reference has been made in this monograph to the lack of consultation and ineffective use of public moneys inherent in failure to employ this principle. The Radford Board makes the same point: 'If the Government were to call for expressions of interest in different types of schools at an appropriately early stage in integrated planning for a region, unforeseen impacts at later stages would be minimised.'

2. The Anderson Committee stated that 'it would appear that Radford will operate with resources to a very small degree below government standards'. (Volume 1, 7.9).

The Radford Board was puzzled by this assertion. First, it planned to have a student/staff ratio at least one-third less favourable than government schools in the ACT. Economies were to be effected by a narrower curriculum emphasing the 'core' subjects, a policy which was 'attractive' to parents of prospective Radford students'.

With regard to capital resources, the Board noted that a public high school in the same region had been handed over - fully equipped - to the ACT Schools Authority. The opening of Radford College in 1984 was to be 'spartan by comparison'.

3. The Radford Board considered that the Anderson Committee placed insufficient emphasis on the value of boarding facilities to be provided for students in outlying and rural areas, also, for children of the diplomatic corps and armed services.

4. The Radford Board submission stated that it planned to open with tuition fees of $1350 per student and hoped to initiate two schemes without prejudicing Group 2 funding status. : first, to enable parents to pay a proportion now, in return for a guaranteed place in the College later at a reduced fee; secondly, to set up a fund to offer scholarships (taking into account academic merit) and bursaries (based on need and family circumstances). Impediments are, of course, a deleterious effect on the SRRI rating and the fact that gifts for these purposes are not, currently, tax deductible.

## LABOR PARTY POLICY

Senator Baume has described Labor Party policy succinctly: 'On the one hand the Labor Party advocates reduced funding to non-government schools'; on the other hand it is considering full funding of the schools integrated into one school system.' 22

One has to distinguish sharply between, first, State and Federal policies; secondly, between the official platform of the Labor Party and its election manifestos or parliamentary wing practice.

### *Federal*

Mrs Ros Kelly, MHR, ALP member for Canberra and a former chairperson of the ACT Schools Authority, declared that 'integration went against the whole philosophy of a school system that we have been trying to establish in Canberra, which has been to stress decentralisation and give greater authority to individual schools.' 23 Marc Robinson, president of the ACT branch of the ALP, referred to some rather anomalous past history, but stated that 'it is not now, and never has been ACT ALP policy that the public and private school systems should be integrated'. 24 A Labor member of the ACT House of Assembly, Paul Whalan, said that he was opposed to a policy of financially forced integration. 25 According to G. Scarrabelotti of *The Catholic Weekly*, Dr R. Campbell, present chairman of the ACT Schools Authority, is a supporter of integration. 26

In another article, Scarrabelotti claimed:

> The exercise of the Prime Ministerial influence did not come as a surprise. Mr Hawke is recognised as a supporter of non-government schools and is known to be a critic of the communist-influenced leaderships of the Teachers' Federations which have been pushing hardest for integration and the abolition of State Aid.

> While the forthright Mr Hawke is P.M., non-government school parents might not have to fear integration. But the pressure for integration and the abolition of State Aid will not go away. The Teachers' Federations and the Left of the ALP still exist. Their policies are intact and their hostility to the P.M. increases.[27]

*Victoria*

Chapters 15 and 27 have already referred to policies of State Labor (Victoria). The relevant Document E (Chapter 15) reads as follows:

> In particular, a Labor Government will abolish the current per capita grants to non-government schools and ask all such schools to opt for either a non-supported or supported status. All schools which opt for supported status must accept the following conditions:
>
> * As of the date the school accepts supported status, the school will be open to all those seeking to enrol within conditions approved by the State Board of Education... The school will be permitted to make compulsory levies on students and parents to a maximum determined by the State Board... The school will conform to statutory requirements and other requirements of the State Government... The governing body of the school (i.e., the authority to whom funds are paid), will have a minority of public nominees on it... An agreed enrolment figure will be the basis upon which grants will be calculated...

## CONCLUSION

This analysis has said little about the Committee's treatment of choice:

> We accept the relevance of these considerations to a redefinition of public schooling. While we value the right of parental choice, we do not regard this as an unqualified right in all circumstances. We believe that fair and accountable processes need to be developed to allow conflicts of values to be addressed and resolved in ways responsive to the general public interest. We recognise that there will be occasions when the exercise of parental rights of choice could run counter to the pursuit of equality, social justice and efficiency through the consequences of the establishment of a new private school for existing schools. Decisions on the funding of new schools cannot be separated from these broader educational and social considerations. (Chapter 9)

Are non-government schools working against 'the pursuit of equality, social justice and efficiency'? If so, who is to blame? One might well read p. 9 of the Anderson 'Summary': 'Our conclusion is that the only real way in which most private schools could operate at resource levels comparable to public schools and be accessible to the general community would be for governments to substantially increase the level of their financial support.' In other words, grant equitable funding and give parents the opportunity, at least, to express their choice in developed and, particularly, developing areas.

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*The funding of Santa Sabina College, Sydney, is not relevant to INTEGRATION, but is listed here as it typifies the pressure on schools and parents in respect to income testing, changing criteria for recurrent funding, and provision of finance for building.*

The college was advised, in May, 1984, that it was being re-classified from Group 2 to 3. The bursar, W. Rowan, stated that 'applications for capital grants in 1981 and 1982 brought the response that the proposals were of high priority but that no funding assistance could be provided. This necessitated raising capital income from parents which the Commission then used to disadvantage the college through the income testing procedure.' According to Dr Tannock, 'the school was able to qualify provisionally for Group 3 status only because it was spending a relatively low proportion of its private income on recurrent purposes. The "surplus" private income was to be spent on a major, long term capital development program. The school compounded the likelihood that it would be re-classified by amalgamating with a large Group 2 primary school, Santa Maria Del Monte.'

Santa Sabina's SRRI was 34 in 1981. When the Coalition changed levels for grants from six to three, the SRRI cut-off point for maximum funding fell from 42 to 30. Schools were given two years to adjust. Santa Sabina re-organised to a SRRI below 30 but, with the introduction of 'Income Testing', it had to spend no less than 75% of its income on recurrent resources. Scoring 69%, it failed. The college spent this proportion only on recurrent costs, because it increased fee income to meet the cost of the capital works. The Commission sought data for 1982-83; the college, now financing the capital project from parent donations, 'passed'. Nevertheless, the classification was Group 2, until Senator Ryan restored the school to Group 3. The amalgamation with Del Monte occurred in 1983. Tested as a 'new school', under new criteria, it was placed in Group 2. The reduction in funding was $400,000, and Rowan stated: 'We anticipate that approximately 30% of families will have to withdraw their daughters.' (The Catholic Weekly: 26 Sept.; 31 Oct.; 21 Nov., 1984; 9 Jan., 1985. News Weekly, 5 Dec., 1984.)

The trustees of Santa Sabina applied to the Federal Court. The decision (17 January, 1985) of Mr Justice Beaumont denied the application that the secondary college and the primary school should be regarded as separate institutions. He accepted that the respondent, the Minister, Senator Susan Ryan, had failed to recognise the true width of her discretion in funding, but it was not for the Court 'to speculate or suggest the ultimate' decision.

# 29 Funding Models for the 1990s

## INTRODUCTION

This chapter deals with the question of equity between families. Few would disagree with the principle but, in applying it to educational funding, there are sharp differences of opinion. The nature of these must be briefly examined.

If one looks at 'scholarly' opinion and is prepared to generalise on the reaction of sections of the academic community, one finds that economists are discontented with the status quo because it is a threat to freedom of choice and efficiency in education and that educationalists regard the dual system as 'divisive'. The latter cite the virtues of Government owned and directed education: the absence of fees and openness of access to justify discrimination against those poor who would, if free, make another choice.

In addition, to provide real choice - by providing families with 'educational credits' according to means - would, it is claimed, promote instability by altering the balance of enrolments in existing schools; the career opportunities of teachers would be affected, particularly in the government sector. This is the background to the debate on new non-government schools, including the legislation for more stringent registration requirements, for 'impact' studies, and conditions so demanding that funding is not granted to schools or to the parents who finance them. In other words, Labor Governments are determined to provide a spectrum of legislation that will discourage a drift of children from government to non-government schools. Any attempt to promote equity between families might work against this policy.

## HOPES AND REALITIES

Mr Whitlam, when Prime Minister in 1973, said: 'The choice for all parents should be one between systems and philosophies of education.'[1] Mr Beazley, his Minister for Education, stated: 'A revolution in principle has taken place. The Commonwealth has arrived at the point of considering, as far as its educational finances are concerned, all Australian children as citizens with equal rights regardless of whether they are at government or independent schools.'[2]

These hopes have not been realised. While not denigrating the achievements of the last decade by both Labor and Coalition Governments, I am convinced that the central error of Karmel's Interim Report was neglect of 'the plight of parents' (6.38) and the introduction of a system which was based entirely on schools and demographic regions, with no consideration for individual persons. The purpose of this chapter is to introduce the family circumstance of each child, and, while still retaining and extending school-based programs for disadvantage, to give special help to the handicapped, deprived or economically poor child as a member of a family.

Weller has noted: 'Education is the prime example of a community service which should involve the whole community.'[3] This includes all members of the tax-paying community, particularly those of high income, without family commitments. It requires an equitable contribution from all parents, who are equal in respect to income and family responsilities.

The protagonists of the State sector - teacher federations, parent organisations, a large number of academics in the faculties of Education in the universities, CAEs and sections of the State Government bureaucracies - regard the present dual system as 'divisive', with the non-government sector as responsible for fostering this division by its very existence. If one is to judge by the degree of vituperation and contemptuous comment, then one must admit that non-Catholic high resource schools are the main target.

As demonstrated in Chapter 20, the issue at the moment is class, but one would be naive to believe that the place of the Catholic 'system' and of schools with a religious base is accepted. While I have no great sympathy for fundamentalist Christianity, I have for the upright parents of this persuasion who wish to give their children education in small ACE schools. I consider more good than harm would come from giving them their choice, and that reasonable choice should not be denied by impact studies which provide pretexts - real or imaginary - for politicians and bureaucrats encouraged by teacher unions. Catholics should be very sensitive to the claims of all parents - except those proven to be anti-social; their own claims rest on the same principle. If divisiveness can be aroused within the non-government community, the aim will be to modify the role of denominational schools by some form of integration.

Many of us have looked at certain schools (including our own at times) with amazement and, often, lack of understanding. Those in power, and their would-be advisers, regard some new small non-government schools as a source of educational scandal. Yet, gross irregularities in standards, professionalism, care of students, and presentation of moral issues are let pass in other main-stream schools. There is far more zeal and determination displayed in seeing that the social mores of our time - with contradictions that threaten the destruction of our society - are taught than in sympathetically considering parents' rights and aims.

The constitutions of both the United States (the First Amendment) and Australia deny the right of Government to establish or favour any religion; this is known as the principle of 'separation of Church and State'. They were aimed at protecting - not, as some think, denying - the rights of individual conscience and practice of religion without threat, intimidation or discrimination. This has been recognised in Australia from the 1960s. In 1983, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld a Minnesota program giving tax deductions to all parents for expenses incurred in the education of their children; the Senate Finance Committee voted to approve a tuition tax credit bill.

Philosophical issues: right and liberty; equality and equity have been dealt with in passing.[4] A key issue is the 'double standard' in use of the word 'need'. For pupils in the government sector, it is 'what is reasonably required'; parents/schools can raise further funds as they wish. For pupils in non-government schools, the criterion of 'need' is the resources existing in the school, and there are disincentives to raise them. As D.B. Clarke has noted: 'A wealthy family with children at a government school has no "need" of a subsidy of $3000 a year for each child but still gets it. A needy family with children at a Catholic school receives much less, and a needy family with children at a non-Catholic independent school may get nothing at all.' [5]

## A VIEW FROM THEOLOGY AND PHILOSOPHY

Despite some consideration in Chapter 21, this monograph has not developed a theology of education in which Christian concepts of justice, charity, and harmony in the community (call it 'peace' if you wish) are examined. The topics are, of course, closely related to concepts of 'right' and 'need'. Where the interpretation of the scriptures once led to a concept of 'justice' in which every man/woman received their due, the current thinking is that the Gospel demands the rectification of wrongs. Where 'charity' once sprung from the love of Christ and recognition of him in his brothers and sisters, it is now a dirty word in which, it is claimed, recipients are demeaned and 'justice' is denied. The relationship between justice and charity is far too complex to be covered by such naive over-simplifications. [6]

## A VIEW FROM ECONOMICS

As pointed out in Chapters 16, 22 and 23, economists and econometricians have shown an increasing interest in education expenditures, largely because these form a growing part of the Gross Domestic Product; there is a substantial technical literature on financing; there are important issues associated with the distribution and efficient use of 'scarce resources', and with the assessment of such efficiency. The authors are mostly academics and parents, and they are keenly interested in the quality of education in their own Commonwealth - funded tertiary area and in the welfare of their own children in primary and secondary schools. They may be Keynesians or Friedmanites, or occupy the grey zone lying in between, choosing their course pragmatically and attempting to ensure that none of the variables escape their predictions. As they cannot control the vagaries of modern life and of world events, they have to combine the skills of a scientist and mathematician with those of an artist. The role and influence of economists have, of course, been spoken of in less flattering terms!

Some are horrified by talk of education as an 'industry' in which there is 'consumption' and 'investment'. However, Consumption merely implies that the services satisfy the wants of persons for knowledge and for both intellectual and cultural stimulation. The services are 'durable', and their effects continue over a life-time. When treated as 'consumption', education may be regarded as a 'private' good with direct benefits to individuals. However, this should not mean that the person who responds in a fully human way to his/her education is not being prepared for a life of 'public' good, where benefits accrue to society as a whole. Some may argue that the main impact will be reserved for the beneficiary's close family, friends and class, but this is to take a narrow view of the human person. One can see the 'public' value of the education of individuals who enhance the stock of knowledge and provide expertise; one cannot even begin to measure the 'social return' from an education which prepares the human spirit for a life of commitment to others. Economists describe these phenomena as 'externalities', 'spillovers' or, more appropriately, 'neighbourhood effects', treating education, from a consumption viewpoint, as a 'quasi-public' good.

Investment, if 'private', may seek to ensure that the consumption is made effective, e.g., a parent is prepared to divert resources from other areas, often making sacrifices, to obtain a favorable environment for the development of the personality of the child. On the other hand, when economists speak of 'investment in human capital', they are generally thinking in material terms, viz., the acquisition of a stock of knowledge and skills which will serve the community by application in the economy. One does not need to labour the point that institutions which have provided a sound education have contributed to the 'public' good, e.g., they have provided a powerful stimulus to the growth of Gross Domestic Product and living standards in Australia. Such institutions may be in the public or private sectors; they may be statutory or 'independent' bodies.[7]

'The new wave' finds the word market distasteful, identifying it with greed and selfish ends. On the contrary, as Chipman starts one of his essays: 'My purpose is to defend the proposition that liberty, justice and the free market are social notions that are mutually supportive.'[8] In Education, defence of the market implies that parents should not suffer financial discrimination in which they have no choice in selection of schools for their children. Admittedly, the 'common good' cannot be provided through the operation of a completely open market, as some will seek personal benefits only. While voluntary efforts for 'the poor' are laudable, they cannot reach all in necessitous circumstances. Therefore, Government has a responsibility to ensure that the legitimate wants of its citizens, young or old, are met, and this involves assistance in their basic and continuing (sometimes termed 'recurrent') education. Part of these wants is the desire to select some field of work which is personally satisfying and, regarded as valuable to society, enables entrance into the 'work force'. A job with earnings is the avenue to marriage, a home, and a family - if, for the moment, we can forget about the alternative life styles which are not serving and will not serve Australia well. To achieve these ends, Governments should foster an educational environment in which the development of persons can be made effective. Where households cannot afford costs, in part or whole, there must be a considerable volume of public investment in education.

Because investment in Education produces a 'public' good, the community as a whole has a responsibility for its members. Lack of opportunity for parenthood, including rejection of this responsibility, should not mean absence of obligation to contribute by taxation to the education of children, in particular. Governments should ensure that no member of the community is denied an education to a minimum standard, extended according to talent and willingness to study into fields which will enrich society culturally, support it socially, or enable it to prosper economically.

This principle does not mean that a Government should provide the service or that it should actively interfere in the educational process, except in so far as it should require reasonable accountability and minimum 'outcomes' from schools by criteria which are not too doctrinaire. Still less does it justify a Government using its economic power in a virtual monopoly to undermine 'competing' schools and the parents who decide to avail of their services. As Milne points out in a discussion of 'Government universities': 'By its very nature the market demand coming from the consumer is muted: and the demand from various pressure groups within academia and the Government are grossly exaggerated... Markets are really very subtle mechanisms that reward ingenuity, innovation and an ability to plan ahead.'[9]

It is reasonable to expect that taxation to ensure education for all should be compulsory but, according to J.S. Mill, 'one thing must be strenuously insisted on; that the Government must claim no monopoly for its education, either in the lower or the higher branches, must exert neither authority nor influence to induce the people to resort to its teachers in preference to others, and must confer no peculiar advantages on those who have been instructed by them... It must neither compel nor bribe any person to come to them...'[10] However, the policies of many teacher unions in the government sector seek 'compulsion' and 'bribery'. It is naive of Davy to claim: The ATF has a policy... It is not a radical policy. It simply supports the view that public schools serve the public interest and should be funded publicly, and that private schools which serve private interests, should not attract public funds, but should be funded privately.'[11] Burke has noted: 'It begs the question to say that the Government or professional educators should control because the Government pays - the Government provides Child Endowment without supervising its allocation over different goods.'[12]

Ronald Henderson, noted for his 'Poverty' reports, said on ABC radio during 1979: 'Big Government is now coming under attack... It is not leaving enough to its citizens, individually or as members of the voluntary groups in the community... I think there is a good case to be made for the proposition that all those who are comfortably off should contribute to the cost of education of their children. If by the rich paying more and the poorer less the total Government contribution were reduced by a third this would be equivalent to an 8 per cent reduction in the rate of income tax...'

Burley has stated:

> Education is a 'capital good'. The benefits of education are spread out over a long life after the relatively short investment period during which it has to be paid for. This gives rise to a cash flow problem, which cannot normally be solved by recourse to the credit market, since the student's human capital cannot be advanced as collateral for a commercial loan. This financial problem is partially solved by government intervention: supplying free education by its own official suppliers, and partially subsidising private suppliers (under certain conditions). None of this is really free but is repaid from everyone's tax contributions over a whole life time... But the financial problem is not solved for those who do not satisfy socialist type eligibility rules for a realistic subsidy. They have to pay twice...at their private school door; and this time with cash down, term by term.[13]

These principles do not exclude the rich paying for the education of their children - either indirectly through the taxation system or directly outside it - while education is free for the children of the poor. The distribution of scarce resources to needs other than education, and the just distribution for education, are difficult questions. However, their solution should not involve different treatment of families with similar income and responsibilities.

Parish noted that, in 1964, the system of Education had two effects. Where parents send their children to non-government schools 'it is likely that children of these families receive less education than they would if the State made no provision for education... Many families who do use the free State educational systems accept a lower standard of education than they would be willing to purchase if they had to pay the full cost of education themselves.'[14]

For the Government to impose burdens and disincentives on its subjects in the achievement of a 'good', be it 'public' or 'private', invites close scrutiny to discern both suspect motive and unsound rationale. It is based on the concept that Governments and 'professionals' 'know better' than parents, and that their methods and controls are essential to create a just society and to effect re-distribution of income and wealth. My own view of the good society is that, in Education, these ends should eventually be achieved by 'voucher' funding of schooling and by cash transfers in which families with children benefit.[15]

## MODELS

I now present alternative models in an attempt to provide solutions in the area of parent equity. The first two use a 'non compensatory, unregulated' taxable voucher system. John Doyle has drawn attention to the Labor-sponsored 'Medibank' ('Medicare'), which funds the consumer of services rather than those who supply them. Medical and hospital services require complicated accounts, because there are hundreds of items that have to be charged separately. Doyle has pointed out that funding school children under what he terms 'Edibank' ('Edicare') would be much simpler, e.g., bulk-billing each term for the Schools Commission estimate of cost in the State in question.[16]

'Non compensatory' means that there is no allowance for 'disadvantage', by issue of supplementary vouchers. 'Handicapped' children, and pupils from low income families, are not neglected in the models presented, but their interests are protected through existing and, one would hope, expanded Government programs for schools and families. Maintenance 'allowances' to family heads are not vouchers or 'educational credits' in the strict sense, because their use is not limited to educational purposes. However, they are an indispensable supplement to family income to enable a good educational 'outcome'.

'Unregulated' means that the model is not dependent on additional private inputs to improve education in a school or of its students. I am aware that many would claim that this is not possible in a divided society, where there is evidence of 'privilege'. However, I see only two alternatives: to prevent private input of any kind into all schools or to permit it. I accept the latter.

### *Model 1*

Model 1 is a study of 'vertical' equity among non-government school parents. It seeks a better distribution of net income of parents / families, with children at different non-government schools, after payment of fees. It makes no suggestions altering the position of parents with children at government schools.

### *Model 2*

Model 2 extends the pattern to embrace a better distribution of net income of all parents / families with children in schools. This involves a study of 'horizontal' equity in which families in equal economic circumstances, with children in all schools, are treated equally.

### *Model 3*

Model 3 involves a steady increase of per pupil grants in real terms to all categories of non-government school. This model is not different in principle to that in use at present. The Minister's *Guidelines 1985-88* promise marginal increases for all schools where the percentage of the 'community standard' from private sources is below 76%. However, the question at issue is the policy of State Governments and the injustice done to families of moderate income who make sacrifices to send their children to schools with high resources / fees. They are being told that this will attract penalty. Irrespective of the Government in power, there seems to be no point in discussing this model, as it is built on a faulty premise, i.e., it neglects the child as a person in a family.

Finally, if the model were accepted, it would be accompanied, as at present, by Government demands for 'resource agreements', with 'maintenance of (parent) effort'. Even if this principle were accepted, it should be assessed by the after-tax price of private schooling to parents. The concessional tax deduction was $400 per pupil when the national Consumer Price Index (CPI) for the June 1974 quarter was 49.1, compared with June 1984, 132.2 (1980-81 = 100), an increase of 270%. In 1973, the level of fees in practically all Catholic secondary schools was such that $400 represented a reasonable claim for educational expenses. The benefit was of significant proportionate value.[17]

## PREMISES AND DEFINITION OF TERMS

There are various premises:

Only finance for general recurrent purposes is considered. Capital and program funding is excluded. However, it is relevant to note that, in the last decade, the State of Victoria has applied over a billion dollars capital to government schools, the estimated budget cost for 1984-85 being $196.7 m. This scale of expenditure is critical when considering the interpretation of 'impact' studies of new schools. In accordance with past policy, there is no provision for non-government school building, so there is no attempt to offer even a token movement towards equity.

Program funding is outside the parameters as it is a supplementary payment, supporting schools or individuals in 'special' circumstances.

All reference to gross funding will be in capital letters; per capita, i.e., per pupil, funding will be signified by lower case letters. All values are expressed in constant terms. The notations are listed in Table 1 and the linking equations in Table 2. The relationship between notations is discussed in prose in the text, together with the relevant equation if it is simple.

### *NOTATIONS*

An attempt has been made to relate the notation to the meaning, e.g., E, e for 'expenditure'; s for 'State'; i for 'Independent'; r for 'recurrent', c for 'capital'; T, t for 'total'; SP for 'Special Programs'; V where a 'voucher' is involved; R for 'rebate'; f for 'fee'; d for 'donation'; oi for 'other income'; c for 'contributed services'; p for 'non school-based educational expenditure' on the pupil.

The list provides comment so that the scope of each item may be better understood. Those who wish to consider the 'voucher equations', should first consider the relevant 'V' terms carefully.

*For spending on all schools*

T = Total Revenue allocated in budgets (Federal and State) for all school-based education.

E = Government (Federal and State) expenditure on school-based education, excluding special programs.

E(r) = Government (Federal and State) general recurrent funding, for 'goods and services'.

E(c) = Government (Federal and State) capital funding. While interest rebate assistance provided to non-government schools by the States (with the exception of South Australia) is strictly a recurrent item, it will be included in this term.[18] It is relevant to note that any assessment of the capital cost of a student place in a government school, perhaps $5,000 in 1984, is underestimated when the capital comes from loan funds and no allowance is made for debt charges.

SP = Cost of special programs, including individual parent benefits (or so considered in Victoria) to defray costs of books, conveyance, etc.

*For spending on 'State' school pupils at primary/secondary level*

E(s) = Total ; E(sr) = Recurrent ; E(sc) = Capital

e(sr) = Average Government per pupil spending on recurrent resources.

e(sc) = Average Government per pupil spending on capital resources, which could include a 'rental' equivalent component, if no 'rental' allowance is made for schools in the non-government sector.

e(st) = Sum of average Government expenditure per pupil.

f(s) = Fees levied on parents to meet recurrent contingencies; variously regarded as 'necessary/essential' by school administrators, but considered to be 'voluntary/optional' by some parents/organisations; other net receipts from students.

d(s) = Donations or bequests for recurrent or capital purposes. [19]

oi(s) = Other income, including moneys raised by 'Parents and Friends' and earned income from investments, interest, etc.

c(s) = The value of contributed services.

p(s) = Parent expenditure (not school-based) on the child for recurrent and, as an incentive, capital purposes. There is evidence that fee savings enable expenditures on tutorial assistance and generous parent payments for clothing and entertainment, with promise of cars or deposits on a house for successful completion of the HSC. [20]

sp(s) = Supplementary funding from programs for disadvantage.

e(srt) = Total 'average' recurrent expenditure per government school pupil, excluding school / family funding by programs for disadvantage.

*For spending on 'Independent' school pupils*

The corresponding terms for Government expenditures in the non-government sector are:

E(i), E(ir), E(ic);

e(ir), e(ic), e(it); these latter terms are provided as 'grants' according to 'groups', 'levels', 'categories'.

f(i) = Fees, with two applications: f(ir) and f(ic); other net receipts from students.

d(i) = 'Donations' - sometimes virtual levies - for recurrent, d(ir), or, more often, capital, d(ic), purposes.

oi(i) = Moneys raised by 'Parents and Friends', etc. Contrary to popular myth, dividends and interest from investments are not features of the Australian school scene, except perhaps for two schools. An important source in 'systemic' schools is parish fund raising and 'sacrificial' giving, based on intermittent or weekly pledges. Such programs involve many in a life-time of 'giving' well beyond the schooling period of their children. oi(i) may be separated into oi(ir) and oi(ic).

c(i) = Contributed services, by those who add resources without commensurate financial remuneration or receive no return at all, as in parent 'working bees.' Religious receive stipends well below award salaries. Lay teachers may be 'contributing' by taking on heavy work loads; teacher associations in the non-government sector are objecting where teachers in some schools are accepting below award or negotiated salaries in order to help parents and keep their schools viable.

p(i) = Parent educational expenditure (not school-based) on the child. At equivalent income and family circumstances, the non-government school parent is less able to spend, i.e., average p(s) > average p(i).

sp(i) = Supplementary funding from programs for disadvantage.

Income(irt) = Total private income per pupil.[21]

e(irt) = Total recurrent expenditure per pupil in a non-systemic school, averaged for systemic schools; the item excludes school/family funding by programs for disadvantage.

### *Under a voucher scheme*

In reading the following section, the terms should be applied separately to various levels of schooling.

If, as suggested in Models 1 and 2 below, a taxable voucher scheme was introduced, it is assumed that the net outlay from Government must be no more than existing expenditures from the Federal and State budgets. The total outlay would be greater than present general recurrent funding, E(r), and returns from taxation of the voucher would have to effect an equal net outlay, i.e., for all pupils (Model 2):

$$E(r) = E(r)(V) - \text{Tax}(V), \text{ where}$$

E(r)(V) = Total outlay under a non-compensatory voucher scheme, i.e., a single voucher that does not vary with disadvantage. School programs/family allowances for disadvantage will be discussed later.

Tax(V) = Revenue obtained from taxation of the voucher according to adjusted income. The voucher would be taxed at an appropriate rate on taxable income, adjusted by special consideration for the number of children attending primary/secondary school.

Consideration has been given to 'savings to Governments' by disallowance for the educational component ($250 maximum per child) within the General Concessional Rebate - at present, $2000. This concession should remain as a 'child benefit' for the following reasons: it is available to all taxpayers; it helps large families most; for secondary students at least, the $250 is fully expended on fares, uniforms, and educational materials; there is little or nothing remaining to cover allowable fees; while there is a rebate of tax of 30 cents for each dollar of the amount of concessional expenditure over $2,000, no more can be claimed for education expenses than $250 per child.

The relevant terms and equation for the non-government sector only (Model 1) would be:

$$E(ir) = E(ir)(V) - \text{Tax}(i)(V)$$

### *LINKING EQUATIONS*

$$T = E + SP \tag{1}$$

$$E = [\, E(sr) + E(sc) \,] + [\, E(ir) + E(ic) \,] \tag{2}$$

$$E(r) = E(sr) + E(ir) \tag{3}$$

$$E(r) = E(r)(V) - Tax(V) \tag{4}$$

$$e(st) = e(sr) + e(sc) \tag{5}$$

$$e(it) = e(ir) + e(ic) \tag{6}$$

e(srt), i.e., per pupil expenditure, 'State school', 'recurrent', 'total from all sources'

$$= [\, e(sr) + f(s) + d(sr) + oi(sr) + c(s) + p(s) \,] \tag{7}$$

e(irt)

$$= [\, e(ir) + f(ir) + d(ir) + oi(ir) + p(i) \,] \tag{8}$$

It should be noted that e(irt) on the left of equation (8) is expenditure on a pupil in an 'Independent' school, whereas the terms on the right are income. (The term, e(ir), could mislead, as the grant is a Government expenditure, but school income.) The equation is only valid if the total private income, [Income (irt)], is expended completely on recurrent resources without allowance for contingencies or provision of a reserve.

When contributed services are regarded as equivalent to a money item, $e(irt)(Resources) = [\, e(irt)(Expenditure) + c(i) \,]$ (9)

For government schools, total expenditure per pupil, e(srt), is somewhat greater than the Government provision, e(sr), and there is no restriction or penalty for any increase. In general, the margin between e(srt) and e(sr) is greatest where government schools are sited in affluent areas.

For the majority of non-government schools, the total expenditure per pupil, e(irt), is much less than e(sr); after adding 'contributed services', it is about 70% of e(sr). The value of the Government grant, e(ir), is well below e(irt), demanding substantial private contributions, even in low-resource schools and poor socio-economic regions.

$e(srt) > e(sr)$ (10) ; cf (7) $e(irt) >>> e(ir)$ (11) ; cf. (8)

Since the report of the Karmel Interim Committee, parents of similar socio-economic status, with a child/children in a non-government school have been provided with a different 'grant', e(ir), according to the school in which their child was placed. If a parent decided to 'invest' in the education of their child by paying high fees, so that the school had a high 'private income' and 'high resources', then he/she was penalised by a reduced e(ir). Eight categories of grants gave way to six levels, to three groups and, from 1985, to twelve categories.

If $e(irt) > e(sr)$, then $e(ir) <<<< e(irt)$ (12)

Unfortunately, there is considerable doubt as to the accuracy of the term, e(sr), because a number of cost factors in government schooling have never been properly assessed.

About three quarters of pupils are in government schools, i.e., $E(sr) > E(ir)$ (13). It should be recognised that these are total fundings from Federal and State sources. Where the relative proportions of general recurrent expenditures, $E(sr)$ and $E(ir)$ in the government and non-government sectors, vary, it does not follow that there has been a change in funding policy; one has to consider changes in the relative populations. Apparent benefits to the non-government sector have, to a great degree, been associated with an increase in relative enrolments. In any case, falls in State school populations have often been ignored in allocation of funds to this sector.

## THE RE-DISTRIBUTION OF NON-GOVERNMENT SCHOOL GRANTS

The aim of the Labor Party, pursued for more than a decade, has been to reduce grants to a few schools of high resource in the non-government sector and to distribute the 'savings' to schools of a great number of schools/pupils with lower resources than are found in an average school in the State sector. These funds have been unequal to the task of 'narrowing the gap' and have led to only minimal flows to 'poor' schools/pupils. In mathematical terms, where n, N refer to the number of students, and 'A' to 'H' refer to the resource categories established by the Interim Committee (1973):

Karmel (1974) $n\ldots \times e(ir\text{: A to E}) > N\ldots \times e(ir\text{: F to H})$,
i.e., the Federal Government made a 'profit' of approx \$3 m. (14).[22]

The corresponding equation describing Senator Ryan's decisions for 1984 were:

$$\$5m. = n \times e(ir\text{:'Hit-list'}) = N\ldots \times e(ir\text{: Group 3}),$$

the impact being significant on the families of many of the n pupils and a pittance for the much greater N (15). The 'hit-list' was titled Group 1(a) in official parlance.

Mrs Di Medlin, the principal of Pembroke School, South Australia - classified into Group 1(b) - has listed, in detail, the alternatives of fee increase/reduction in services which Government policies have imposed on her school. She asked 'Ministers of Education at both State and Federal level to help me to make a decision', particularly as Senator Rosemary Crowley, deputising for the Federal Minister, Senator Susan Ryan, had - in opening a new junior school on 6, November, 1983 - praised the efforts made by Pembroke in the education of girls. Would the Ministers advise Mrs Medlin to close her boarding houses, her unit for the deaf, to remove compassionate remissions of fees, or reduce her curriculum offerings and go 'academic', etc.?[23]

There is a similar anomaly in Victoria. A Group 1(a) school offers provision for the gifted and migrant child; it invests in remedial treatment and counselling. It receives a lower grant than a Group 1(b) school - popularly identified by the press with the 'elite' or 'wealthy' - which, it is alleged, effects economies permitted by adherence to an academic curriculum.

According to current thinking, questioned because of incomplete data and averaging of relative expenditures/incomes:

A: e(irt)('Hit-list') > B: e(sr)(Govt) > = < (?)
C: e(irt)(Group 1b) > e(irt)(Group 2) (16)

The following figures, Primary (P) and Secondary (S), at 1984 price levels, are derived from a NCIS interpretation of official data: 'Australian School Statistics', January, 1984, and obtain some general support from Appendix 3, CSC, 'Application for Eligibility for Commonwealth Assistance' (July, 1984). Averages/approximations for grants and fees are listed first and second respectively, before summing.[24]

Primary, A: [(640 + 1700) = 2340]; B: 2270;
$ C: [(730 + 1155) = 1885]; D: [(760 + 550) = 1310]

Secondary, A: :[(1010 + 2850) = 3860]; B: 3360;
$ C: $ [(1150 + 2410) = 3560]; D: [(1230 + 1380) = 2610]

These figures represent expenditure in the State school and income in the non-government school. They are not strictly comparable. In the non-government sector, it is essential, for sound management, that income should exceed probable expenditure.

The NCIS estimate for Income(irt) in Group 3 schools was $1190 (Primary) and $2060 (Secondary). Current evidence suggests 'contributed services' in each sector to be about $200. When this is added to these expenditures, the secondary resources would be about 67% of those in an average State school, or roughly 70%, the figure quoted as typical of the past decade.[25] For primary schools, a total income of '$1390', or thereabouts, would lead to a figure well below 70%. It is considered that the error lies in a misconception not always appreciated, viz., that inputs into, say Catholic, 'systemic' schools should not be calculated from fees, f(i), without consideration of 'other cash income', oi(i).

Some government schools in high cost States and Territories have recurrent resources that would place them in Group 1, including 1a, the hit-list category. On an average, schools in all, or most, States have resources - as costed - bordering on Group 1.

In addition, there is need for qualification of Schools Commission estimates, which are based on incomplete data from the States. For example, actuarial studies of Federal and State Government indexed superannuation schemes have estimated the cost at about 25% of salaries. After allowing for employee contributions, the figure would be 20%. The Commission evaluates Government cost in the superannuation of teachers at 5.2%.[26] If salaries constitute about 80% of education costs, the impact of superannuation on per pupil recurrent expenditure should be set at about 16% rather than 4%, i.e., error in this factor alone leads to an under-estimate of approximately 10% in government school per pupil costs.[27]

Let us consider the effect of reducing the grant, e(ir), in a high resource school or in any school. Applying equations (9) and (8), expenditure on recurrent resources can only be maintained by raising fees, f(ir), appealing for donations, d(ir), to form an interest-bearing trust, or seeking contributed services, c(i), from parents and former school students or well-wishers. Increasing fees will, of course, force some children out of the school and render it more elitist. The other alternative, which Labor Governments seem to want, is to reduce resources by redundancies, i.e., sacking staff, the main cost factor.

Applying equation (9) to a low resource school, leads to the conclusion that with contributed services decreasing, fees being kept within the 'capacity to pay' of as many as possible, expenditure on resources can only be maintained by a steady increase in government grants. As low resource non-government schools are mostly, but not exclusively, in the Catholic sector, it has been suggested by those opposed to them that they should pour all their resources into raising recurrent standards in existing schools and divert donations for capital purposes, d(ic), to recurrent purposes as d(ir). These suggestions fail to recognise important factors:

(a) During the last decade, there have been substantial improvements in the teacher/pupil ratio in Catholic schools;

(b) The standards of Catholic schools, judged by 'outcomes', have varied from excellent, to good, to acceptable - in spite of total recurrent resources being only 70% of those in the State sector;

(c) Moneys for building are subscribed, in great part, in special appeals, sometimes with guarantees of 'sacrificial giving' over a period of time. Obviously, such benefactors will, in the main, have a keen interest in a particular building project - because they are parents or local parishioners or people of the region. It may be an 'ordinary' school, a boarding school, or a 'special' school. Where Catholics see a desperate need, they have always responded. However, like all people, they like to know where their money is going. Finally, their generosity does not justify rejection of the rights of the children for whom they care.

## THE VOUCHER IN GENERAL

In the background to the hostility to vouchers is the thesis that government monopoly and majority direction (51%+) should determine the whole structure of education, and that 'experts' always know better than parents. The instrument of power is the purse by which parental decisions are made under economic pressure. State school teacher unions fear that the availability of vouchers could encourage some families to move their children from the government to the non-government sector. It is quite misleading to present such parents as 'ambitious' and 'aspiring'. They are not necessarily seeking a school which has higher resources; they are looking at 'the market' (the despised term) to find a school that is best for their child and which reflects the values they attempt to develop in the home. It may be this or that government or non-government school; it may be in the neighbourhood or outside it. If it is wrong to 'fiddle with' or manipulate the market in material commodities, the moral issue is even more critical in the field of education of little children and adolescents.

Poor non-government school parents cannot afford to provide fees, let alone donations. In addition, when families do make an effort to meet what they consider obligations, it is taken for granted by well paid politicians and bureaucrats that they have the capacity to maintain this effort, a phrase that nowhere appears in the Schools Commission's Act (1973). In practice, it has relevance, but not without consideration to the net outlay (after tax price of schooling) for parents in 1974, when the Labor Government cut the tax deduction severely. All calculations should be made after adjusting the pre-1974 concession to 1984 terms.

The voucher suggested is of the 'non-compensatory' type, i.e., disadvantaged children would not receive 'a voucher' providing extra funds. Their needs should be met through CSC programs in schools and by Commonwealth and State support for those in individual need. Where the State is a source of benefits, it has a responsibility to treat the non-government sector equitably, e.g., in support for the integration of the disabled into normal schools. Where there are schools in areas classified as disadvantaged, efforts should be made to obtain the involvement of trusts/foundations/large production corporations to provide financial and personal support in the educational process to all schools - government and non-government - in the region. However, 'program' support of schools is not enough. There must be general financial support for families. I address myself to this question in the section on 'Affirmative Action' below.

The voucher suggested is not what is sometimes called a 'regulated' voucher. 'Regulated' means that fees cannot be paid. This is inequitable as, first, government schools are permitted to increase their resources by 'voluntary' (I am aware that some object to 'compulsory') fees; secondly, they are permitted to accept donations; thirdly, they are permitted to raise funds in a variety of ways - including, in Western Australia, the sale of rights to a prototype bicycle. Parents, saved from expense because their children are at a government school, are not restricted in their use of disposable income for educational purposes. Well-to-do parents are free, economically, to move into attractive residential catchments served by high quality government schools and to give above average support to these schools.

## VOUCHERS IN THE NON-GOVERNMENT SECTOR

Because of the difference in costs of schooling at the various levels - primary, middle secondary, and senior secondary - there would have to be, at least. three voucher values and three equations. When the three net outlays are added together, they must be equal to the full sum of Commonwealth/State net budget outlay (after-tax return).

In Model 1, Total Government recurrent funding (State and Federal), to the government and non-government school sectors is regarded as constant in real terms, i.e., E(1985) = E(1986...) (17). Increases/decreases are political decisions, as is distribution between the government and non-government sectors and allocation to recurrent or capital purposes; see equation (2). To analyse Federal funding separately from that of the State is the height of dishonesty.

In Model 1, State schools are not affected in their recurrent funding and the position of government school parents is in no way altered, i.e., total Government expenditure, E(sr), and per pupil expenditure, e(s), are taken as constant in real terms over time. Even if there are variations in funding, whether in regards to the total amount or the 'share of the cake', the concept of re-distribution of benefits among parents in the non-government sector is not dependent on these factors, important though they may be in the realm of equity.

Non-government school children would be issued with vouchers which would be taxed from their parent's/guardian's income according to an appropriate tax scale. Adding the voucher to taxable income is rejected, as this would bring some parents into a higher tax bracket and penalise large families. This chapter does not consider the relative position in equity of one- and two-income families or the situation of families with two or more children attending non-government schools.

Where v(i) = Gross value of the voucher, then equation (18) for the net value of the voucher where taxation '%' applies is:

$$v(i) \times (1 - 0.01'\%').$$

The total value in real terms of the present per capita grants to non-government schools will be the basis for the net funding of this sector under a voucher scheme. The scheme will demand greater co-ordination and fiscal rationalisation of finances available to the Commonwealth and States than has been effected to date.

The value of the voucher will be equal to or less than that of a child at a government school of similar character (primary/secondary at two levels - junior and senior). There is need for a professional study carried out by taxation actuaries. However, the value should exceed the present Category 12 grant to ensure that there would be no loss to a parent/guardian in the lowest tax bracket with a child in such a school; there would be a gain for a low-income parent with a child in a higher resource, higher fee school. If either child received some form of scholarship or bursary from a trust, this - and the situation in the family - should be considered in interpreting the net value, after taxation, of any Government assistance.

The relevant equation, the value of the voucher, v(i), varying for the primary and secondary child, would be as follows:

E(ir), General recurrent Federal and State expenditure on the non-government sector in the pre-voucher period =

E(ir)(V) - Tax(i)(V), i.e., Net outlay in the 'voucher era' (Total outlay less tax recovered less educational rebates previously allowed)

$$= n(1) \times [\ v(i) \times (1 - 0.01'\%'\ ] + n(2) \times [\dots] + n(3) \times [\dots] \dots \quad (19)$$

where (i) indicates that the term applies to taxpayers with children in 'Independent', but not 'State' schools. n,...is the number of taxpayers in a category. I do not examine the number of categories and only suggest that the tax '%' to be applied should be closer to the 'actual' than to the 'marginal' rate. Low-income earners should derive the greatest benefit from the voucher. As stated, it is a task for taxation actuaries to determine the balance of the variables - the value of the voucher, the taxation levels, and the consideration to be given to family size. Their task will not be easy, as no Federal Government has required the Department to keep and interpret comprehensive records. The interpretation of the equation would have to be modified to allow for the family size factor, but formulation need not be varied if there is a table in each tax category relating '%' to combinations of primary/secondary school-going children dependent on a taxpayer.

## VOUCHERS FOR ALL

Model 2 considers all children, whether at government or non-government schools. Equation (20) is built on a variant of equations (3) and (19), i.e.,

$E(r)$, General recurrent Federal and State expenditure (Federal and State) - for both 'State' and 'Independent' schools in the pre-voucher period $= E(sr) + E(ir)$

$= E(r)(V) - Tax(V)$, i.e., Net outlay in the 'voucher era'

$$= N(1) \times [\ (v) \times (1 - 0.01\text{'\%'})] + N(2) \times [\ (v)\ldots \qquad (20)$$

The value of the voucher, (v), for parents with children in non-government schools could be set marginally below the average State school per pupil cost, e(sr), to allow for diseconomies of scale and 'circumstances' of the public sector. Equation (20) should be formulated for the primary and secondary sectors separately. When expressed in words, it states: If the net allocation of moneys for recurrent purposes is kept constant in real terms, thus respecting budgetary constraints; if the voucher is equal to the average cost of education in the 'State' sector or adjusted cost in the 'Independent' sector, then the value of the tax '%' can be ascertained for various categories, N(1), N(2)... in the tax-paying parent population. Alternatively, the tax rate could be set at levels which enable savings to be distributed to children in poor families.

Some would regard this suggestion as naive and politically impossible. I am aware of the difficulties: the danger of loss of equilibrium in schooling as parents 'shop around' for schools best suited to the needs of their children; the strong objection of parents with children at government schools paying for their children's education, even if their means permit it; the momentum behind the present 'dual' system, which through the dexterity of Dr Tannock and his technicians, and Mr Hawke's brilliant pragmatism and knowledge of the Australian mind, still creaks along. However, Model 2 recognises the principles of equity and need, coupled with a real freedom of choice for parents.

## AFFIRMATIVE ACTION TO RIGHT INEQUALITY

Affirmative action will not right inequality in a society, but it may help. As Karmel has said: 'In discussions on equality and education, it is important to be clear whether reference is to equality of outcomes or equality of opportunity. No society produces an exact equality of outcomes. The question of how much inequality a society is prepared to tolerate is an important political issue... Equality of educational opportunity is the contribution that the educational system makes towards equality of social opportunity and greater social mobility.'[28]

## PROGRAMS

Commission Programs for schools/children currently seek to rectify inequality. They should be continued and, if possible, expanded with much the same criteria for classification. This is almost certainly the Labor Government's long-term view, and it is requiring the Commission to provide a report on the operation of the Specific Purpose Programs by early 1985. In addition, the terms of reference of the 'Quality of Education Review Committee', to report in April, 1985, include 'in relation to specific purpose programs, a review of which student groups are in greatest need of specific forms of assistance'.

There were 9,898 schools in Australia in 1982; 1,457 were classed as disadvantaged. The number fell to 1,356 in 1983, of which 1,075, with 358,000 children were in government schools; 251 systemic and 30 non-systemic schools, with a total of 63,750 children, were in the non-government sector.

The Country Areas Program was expanded substantially between 1982 and 1983. There were 1,010 schools (88.1% of which were government schools) and 129,174 students (89.8% of whom attended government schools) covered by the Program in 1983.

1,188 ethnic schools and 216 school locations where insertion classes were held were funded under the Ethnic Schools Program in 1982. 46 different, predominantly European, languages were taught.

In 1982, there were 26,666 students in special schools and 16,706 students in special classes at ordinary schools funded under the Special Education Program. 87.9% of these students attended government schools. Nearly 90% of non-government special school enrolments were in schools that had no religious affiliation. The Guidelines for 1985 have provided money for 'integration'; the Government also requested that a separate program of early intervention services for children below school age should be established in 1985.

In addition, there are the following programs, catering largely for the disadvantaged, in both the government and non-government sectors: 'Participation and Equity'; 'Computer education'; 'Multicultural education'; 'English as a second language'; 'Children in residential institutions'; 'Severely handicapped'.[29]

## FAMILY ALLOWANCES

L. Phillips states with some truth: 'It seems that if you want to know what you already know then you take immmediate steps to obtain Government funding to undertake some research.'[30] Do we have to 'prove', a priori, the principles stated by J. Sanders, 'the family is the basic unit of society. The family is responsible for love and care, for preparation for life, for solving its problems and for leaving it with dignity... As the family falls appart so then does society. Law and order, like charity, begin at home... The welfare State we are building is a cardboard Jerusalem, replacing a society of flesh and blood.'[31]

One might agree with the politician Peter Steedman, MHR, that 'when it comes to parenthood many are called, but there are quite few who should never have been chosen'.[32] He might have added that we live in a society which gives little attention to values and ideals which will promote stability and fidelity in marriage and families.

An active charity, offering both material and spiritual assistance, need not imply dependence and, indeed, dependence on the Government can be more demeaning than the help of someone who voluntarily gives part of his resources, or better his person, to the poor. Nevertheless, in modern society, the Government is the only organisation with adequate financial means, even if it is not always the best medium for distribution. In addition, it is desirable that it should be a stimulus rather than a substitute for voluntary activity.

Burke has noted a comment of Kohn and Schooler (1969): 'Lack of autonomy [of the poor]...is a key factor underlying the association of low social class and low motivation in education.'[33] It is, therefore essential to supplement family income to create conditions in which educational success of the children is promoted.

General income support programs, with outlays on 15-24 year olds in 1982-83, were as follows: 'Unemployment Benefit' ($990 m.), 'Sickness Benefit' ($48 m.), 'Invalid Pension' ($82 m.). 'Widow's Pension' and 'Supporting Parents Benefit' ($256 m.), and 'Sheltered Employment Allowance' ($16 m.) were accompanied by assistance - in addition to family allowances ($202 m.) of between $5.25 and $10.50 per child - for dependent children: $12 for each child with an extra $8 for a sole parent beneficiary. Other entitlements were: 'Handicapped Child's Allowance' ($2 m.) of $21.25 per person, and 'Family Income Supplement' of $12 for families of low income, but not receiving social security.

Special benefits were available to assist the education of aboriginal ($7 m.), isolated ($8 m.), and soldier's children. However, the main one of interest here is the Secondary Allowances Scheme ($29 m.) which is 'to help lower income families keep their children at secondary school for the final two years (11 and 12)'. The supplementary grant in 1984 was up to $20.12 per week, paid at the beginning of each term.[34]

A Commonwealth Government document (January, 1984) suggests that sixteen year olds from low income families (but below Year 11) should receive education assistance. The report (p. 70) throws out the suggestion that allowances should be paid directly to students, with the option of a LAFH (Living away from home allowance). It later (p. 72) supplies very sound and obvious reasons for rejecting this suggestion which is obviously designed to equate secondary with tertiary students.[35]

## Victoria [36]

### Maintenance Allowances

The Victorian State Government provides a means-tested 'maintenance allowance' for post primary pupils in Years 7 to 10; the value was raised from $165 (1973) to $208 per annum in 1974, and has been held at this value for a decade. In 1984, 29,464 pupils received allowances (a 10% rise on 1983), including 16,575 from State High and 9,028 from State Technical schools (a total of 86.7%). 3,336 (11.3%) were from registered (non-government) schools, compared with 2793 in 1983, a rise of 20%. The categories of family included, overall, the following: widows (6,876); single parents (6,230); invalids (4,325); unemployed (5,028, of whom 587 had children at registered schools); wage earners (829, of whom 140 had children at registered schools).

Data for State Schools (1981) are interpreted:

| Schools | Receiving allowances | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Below 3% | 3-10% | 10-20% | 20-30% | 30-42% |
| High (292) | 35 | 189 | 51 | 10 | 7 |
| Tech (109) | 2 | 52 | 46 | 7 | 2 |

The means-test is governed either by the minimum wage (updated by the CPI) as determined by the the Australian Conciliation and Arbitration Commission for the Metal Industry Award 1971, or by social security criteria for married or single supporting parents. The cut-off points vary markedly according to the classification, and anomalies are increased in application to large families. The most severe criteria apply to the employed with a number of dependent children! In Catholic schools, fees charged for those receiving the 'maintenance allowance' are reduced to the $208 or are covered by private arrangement.

A living Away from Home Allowance of $80 per annum ($40 prior to 1978) was available for boarders after World War II; it was not means-tested. The allowance was discontinued from the beginning of 1984.

### Education Allowances

As far back as 1964, the Victorian Government had introduced a 'Matriculation Book Allowance' and, in 1977, the benefit was extended to all pupils in secondary schools. According to the State Treasurer of the time, it was intended to be of 'assistance to parents of students at both primary and secondary levels in meeting the cost of text books, subject fees, stationery and school requisites'. The allowance, which varied, in 1983 from $20 in 'Prep-Year 3' to $92 in Year 12 is paid directly to schools on behalf of parents/students. From the start of the 1985 school year, allowances for government school pupils will be 5% higher than for those in non-government schools. As this benefit has always been associated with the pupil/family, not the school, the adjustment - not associated with parent means - is discriminatory.

## Conveyance Allowances

Travel of children for compulsory schooling is a considerable expense to parents. Prior to 1984, the Education Department gave secondary students refunds for public transport to a maximum of $300 (or, alternatively, a 'private transport' allowance of $50); primary school pupils received 25 cents per day, irrespective of their mode of travel. Country students are still governed by these regulations. Since 1944 the Government has met the full cost of certain bus services, carrying children from all schools.

Students, generally, receive no allowance for tickets purchased under the Melbourne Transit Authority's 'MET' scheme. If secondary students are in receipt of a 'maintenance allowance', the Education Department refunds two-thirds of the fare, subject to a distance qualification between home and the nearest State school. If one can generalise from a complex situation, the majority of other parents are worse off under the new scheme. This statement would certainly apply to those with children at schools, which can only be reached by crossing a 'neighbourhood' boundary or have to be approached from the city fringes outside the MET system. The new charges are sometimes justified, speciously, on the ground that the tickets entitle the student to travel beyond the school and during weekends.

The State Budget Papers, 'Appropriation (1984-85, no. 1), list 'Student travel - allowances and grants' for Program 288 - Non-Government Schools as $5.2 m. (1983-84, payments) and $1.9 m. (1984-85, estimate). It is unlikely that this difference is equal to the net benefit provided to parents of these children by the MET scheme. In fact, the operation appears to involve net savings to the State Government by transfer of responsibility to an instrumentality which must attempt to 'balance its books'. However, this should not be at social cost - the expense of large families and the choice of non-government school for the children of low-income earners. Anomalies arise for children who have to cross 'neighbourhood' boundaries and whose homes are outside, and whose schools are within, the MET system.

## The Commonwealth Secondary Allowances Scheme

A monograph (1982) by Phil Meade indicates that SAS has strong support in the community, with about half the children - often in acute emotional need (p. 35) - in one parent families. He found the large majority of recipients to be 'hard-working students'. Parents far preferred SAS to the adolescent 'going on the dole'. From 1974, the first year that SAS was introduced, to 1980, there was 'no increase in the deduction ($450) for another dependent child', a fact that might be associated with evidence that large families were in greatest need.[37]

The 1984 Budget increased the grant by 15% to $1202. During calendar year 1984, maximum payments were available where the Adjusted Family Income was $12,983 or less; some allowance was payable on Adjusted Family Incomes up to $17,112 or higher if there was more than one eligible student in the family. A case could be made for holding these figures in current terms (they have been increased by 10% for 1985), but to increase deductions for large families.

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8. Chipman, L. 'Liberty, Justice and the Market'. CIS Occasional Papers, 1981. The Centre of Independent Studies.

9. Milne, F. 'Arthritic Academia: the problem of Government universities', in Albon and Lindsay (eds), pp. 195, 201. J. Goldring, professor of law at Macquarie University, has criticised economists who argue for leaving education policy to 'market forces'; see 'Is education a commodity?', Australian Society, 3, no.7, July, 1984. He claims that 'full cost fees for all students are the logical consequence of a "free market" approach that treats education as a commodity'. The present monograph questions this simplistic statement. While I write in this chapter of consumption/investment and accept trends in the approaches of academic economists, I nowhere treat of education as 'a commodity'. In fact, I have argued against those apologists, who reject 'parent right' and equate education with transport, etc. One might note that N. Hicks, 'Philosophers v Economists - and the argument [on medical care] loses', in 3, no. 2, February, 1984, also takes a hostile view of 'the economists'. He states: 'Not much progress will be made with the debate while the economic case is surrounded by the libertarian assumptions about individual rights working through the market that appear to reign in the Centre for Policy Studies '[at Monash University]. It is hard to assess whether Hicks is more concerned with the fact that people have 'rights' or with the dangers of the 'market'.

10. Mill, J. S. Principles of Political Economy, Bk 5, Ch 11, s. 9, in 'Collected Works III', University of Toronto Press, 1965. See M.J. Charlesworth, 'The Liberal State and Control of Education' in Selleck (ed) for a study of Mill's thought. Cf. Arnold Toynbee's statement that, if the State gained a monopoly of education, it would be tempted 'to subsidise lines of study that seem likely to increase its power'; quoted in 'Freedom under fire', Independent Schools Information Service, U.K., 1980. B.A. Santamaria states (1984) states: 'It was useless to try to convince men of Mannix's generation that the attempted monopoly of education by a secular State system had purely educational purposes and was not, in fact, directed at an ideological end.' For a defence of the concept of Government monopoly, see 'Private Schools', (Socialism in the 80s, A Labour Party, U.K., discussion document, 1980), which states: 'Labour's longer term policy is the elimination of the private sector.'

11. Davy, V. Fifth National NCIS Conference, June, 1984.

12. Burke, G. 'Financing an education authority' in Designing a new education authority, Occasional Report, no. 2, p. 238, Education Research Unit, Research School of Social Sciences. 1973. G.S. Harman and C. Selby Smith (eds). ANU press.

13. Burley, S.P. 'Education and Public Finance'. Address to the Australian Parents' Council, 4 August, 1984; see APC Review, X, no. 3, 1984. Note, also, his 'Education today and public finance', Social Survey, 33, no. 8, September, 1984, pp. 232-239.

14. Parish, R.M. 1964. 'State aid to education' in Education for Australians, p. 230 . 1964. R.W.T. Cowan (ed). Melbourne: Cheshire.

15. Mortensen, K.G. See Chapters 16, 22, and 23 of this monograph for a general consideration of voucher funding.

16. Doyle,J. 'The vexed question of school funding: carrying the needs policy to its logical conclusion', The Canberra Times, 2 December, 1982; cf. the editorial of 16 December, 1982. Doyle stated: 'Like Medibank, fund the consumer of services rather than those who supply them. You will be able to claim...at least 85 per cent of the approved schedule fee for each service, that is, of the cost at a government school. Medical and hospital services involve complicated billing, because there are hundreds of items that have to be charged separately. Funding school children would be much simpler...' 'Educare' is an alternative term to 'Edibank'.

17. Refer R.A. Williams (1984), particularly Fig 2, for 'the real value of taxation concession for current expenditure on education (1948-81)'. Cf. K.G. Mortensen, 'Finance for independent schooling', examining taxation as at 1974, in D'Cruz and Sheehan (eds), pp. 151, 154-5, and Education and Family socio-economics (1977), Part II, 8, considering costs/fees. I am grateful to Professor Williams for discussion of the principles that should determine the formulation of equations for taxable vouchers; any errors or inadequacies, in this Chapter 29, are mine.

18. Full comparisons are provided in 'Queensland Catholic Schools: Summary of requests to the Queensland Government for financial assistance, 1983-84'. QCEO, 12 July, 1983.

19. Maslen, G. The Age, 24 July, 1984. Education Department of Victoria (1983), p. 48, commented: 'No information is available on the magnitude of privately raised funds for government schools while ironically, in terms of "public accountability", such information is available for non-government schools.'

20. Mulhall, Lisa. 'Now kids have a staggering spending power...' The Herald, 26 September, 1984. She stated: 'Any way you look at it, Australian children aren't financially impoverished little creatures.' There are impoverished and low-income families with children in both government and non-government schools. Where family circumstances are equal, the latter, having to support their schools, experience greater financial hardship; see the comment of Patricia Apps, cited in Chapter 22.

21. CSC reports generally divide 'private income' as follows: 'tuition fees', 'other cash income', and 'contributed services'.

22. See K.G. Mortensen in Sheehan and D'Cruz (eds), p. 145.

23. Medlin, Di. Fifth National NCIS Conference, June, 1984.

24. National Council of Independent Schools. Facts and Figures, 2, no. 2, July, 1984, Topic C. This analysis states: 'The latest available statistics (1981) indicate that no denominational group had recurrent per capita income exceeding $150 from sources other than fees or government grants, with the average for all Independent schools being $58.' This is not consistent with my reading of Table 5.12 in 'Australian School Statistics'.

25. CSC: Report for the Triennium 1982-84, Table 10.9 (1979) suggests that resources in the average Australian Catholic school (P and S) were 71% of the corresponding State school; also, note CSC: Australian School Statistics, First edition, January, 1984, Tables 5.5 and 5.6 (1979, 1981). CSC's 'Recommendations for 1984', Table F, gives the origin of total resources in 1981. 'Catholic schools' derived 70.6% from Government grants, 17.4% from private funds of all types, and 12.0% from 'contributed services'. Table 10.13 from the 1982-84 report shows, for 1979, the average income per student of non-government schools from private sources - according to the Levels 1 to 6. See, also, Mathews (1983), p. 71, for a condensed presentation of Tables 10.9 and 10.13.

26. CSC: 'Target Recurrent Resource Standards Study: Draft Report', February, 1984, p. 202.

27.. Potter, O. E. 'Who really pays for education...' Paper presented to the the Australian Parents' Council, 5 August, 1984. See, also, T. Sykes, 'Superannuation scandal: $2.5 billion unfunded', The Bulletin, 4 September, 1984; P. Costigan, 'PS...there's a catch in the pensions', The Herald, 12 September, 1984; and Hugh Morgan, 'Education and Reality', mimeo.

28. Karmel, P. 'The educational system and the labour market' in Australian Economic Policy, pp. 206-7, J.P.Nieuwenhuysen and P.J.Drake (eds), Melbourne University Press.

29. CECV 'Report 1983' gives benefits flowing to Victorian non-government schools through the Commonwealth's Special Programs. In 1983, 67 parish primary schools, 11 Catholic secondary schools and 5 non-Catholic schools received $1,991,101 under the disadvantaged program. 125 community language programs were funded through the Ethnic Schools Program in Catholic Schools - 113 in Italian, 2 in Maltese, 2 in Dutch, 1 in German, 1 in Greek, 4 in Polish and 2 in Arabic. $243,088 was received for the integration of handicapped and disabled children into Catholic schools. The CECV administered the Transition from School to Work Program on behalf of all non-government schools in Victoria; the total Commonwealth grant was $1,188,988 in 1983. The Commonwealth supplied over $7 m. for English as a Second Language general and new arrivals programs.

30. Phillips, L.J., The Age, 3 September, 1984.

31. Sanders, J., The Australian, 17 October, 1984.

32. Steedman, P. The Herald, 16 October, 1984.

33. Burke, p. 237, citing M. Kohn and C. Schooler, 1969.

34. A spot check on boys' Catholic secondary schools showed that, in 1984, 13.3% at A (Years 7 to 12) were in receipt of the allowance at Year 11, 20.0% at Year 12. A second school, B, had 10% at both levels. In another school (C, Year 11 and 12 only), 19.0% and 19.6%, respectively, were recipients. Fees in these schools were about $600 per annum. The State Government 'Education Allowance' went towards an additional 'Book and Materials levy'; a class 'retreat/camp' and transport produced additional charges.

35. Office of Youth Affairs and the Social Welfare Policy Secretariate. Income Support for Young People. Canberra: AGPS, 1984. See, also, Schools Commission. Direct Payments and Allowances to School Students in Australia, 1980.

36. Education Department of Victoria (1983) contains data on family benefits. The heading, 'Private schools get lion's share' of an Age report, 14 August, 1984, by G. Maslen is a fanciful interpretation of the reality, as J. McHugh noted in 'Access Age', 15 August, 1984. The departmental report, p. 20, gives a figure of 6.84% for expenditure on non-government schooling during 1981-82, as a percentage of the total. The figure for non-government school enrolments, calculated from 'Statistical information on sectors of Education in Victoria to 1982', Table 1, was 27.5%.

37. Meade, P. An evaluation of the Secondary Allowances Scheme. Canberra: AGPS, 1982. See, also, brochure, 'Secondary Allowances Scheme 1984'. Cf. Barbara Fih, 'Literacy problems affect 1 m.: study', The Age, 20 August, 1984, where she reports findings of the Australian Council for Adult Literacy showing that the loss of a father or other family problems correlated with illiteracy.

Education received only passing reference during the December, 1984, Federal Election.* The welfare of families, while not a feature of Labor's Election policy, became a subject of critique. This book has been concerned with this issue insofar as it relates to the freedom of parents, particularly poor parents, in educational choice; and to 'outcomes' for their children, including the opportunity to continue schooling.

The key question arising from the Election was provision of adequate disposable family income, based on wages, tax concessions, and transfer payments. The following principles must be observed:

* The lid must be held on gross wages, including 'on-costs' (workers' compensation, long service/sick/holiday leave, superannuation, etc.) which are linked to rates of pay. This control is essential: to reduce inflation, facilitate exports, and create employment opportunities.

* Taxation reform must be directed to the family with dependants.

* Transfer payments must be targeted to real needs.

Measures to make the family economically secure will not, alone, succeed in the face of the abdication by many of *personal* responsibility for their children, which is discouraged by the character of our society and by marriage 'law reform'. This chapter, however, is restricted to factors which have been prejudicial to the economic welfare of families. If one is to be aware of the circumstances which have progressively worked against the concept of 'the family wage', it is first necessary to understand the history of Australian wages' policy.

## WAGES AND THE FAMILY

*Wages* are often viewed, narrowly, as the subject matter of a contract between employer and employee, the value being determined by supply and demand in the labour market. As a minimum, wages should be sufficient to meet the needs of a modest and secure family life. In Australia, the rights of the head or income-earning members of a family are not recognised by increased wages, but by wages, the tax rebate for a non-earning spouse, and (inadequate) family allowances. While workers may receive incremental payments based on years of service, these supplements are related to the presumption of increased job experience and 'value' to the employer, not the needs of dependants.

With the exception of the DLP, no political party has had a coherent policy on the family wage. As will be seen, the Liberal/Country Party Coalition has helped families significantly through its child endowment policies, but on an ad-hoc basis. The *Federal Platform, Policy Objectives and Constitution 1984*, 'The Family', pp. 44-45, of the National Party, is excellent, but needs development before it becomes a practical policy. The 'workers' party - Labor and its ACTU support - has been indifferent to principles underlying a family 'social' wage.

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* The MX missile decision, and ambiguities about the future of ANZUS, are signs that Hawke cannot avoid his 'high noon' with the Socialist Left. The undermining of his authority, starting with capitulation on foreign policy matters, could be followed by pressure and surrender on other issues - including Education.

In 1901, Heydon, J., a NSW arbitrator, said: 'Every worker, however humble, shall receive enough to enable a human life.' This principle was adopted by Higgins, J. in the famous 'Harvester' case in 1907. He estimated the price of necessities for a family of five (father, mother and three children) and arrived at a figure of 32 shillings and five pence per week. Noting that 'reputable' firms paid an unskilled worker 42 shillings, he saw the difference as 'miscellaneous expenditure' and set this higher figure as 'the basic wage'.

In 1920, a Royal Commission again considered the basic wage which had been adjusted to £4-0-0. The Commission found that, on a needs basis, it should have been £5-16-6, but the Arbitration Court considered that the economy did not have the 'capacity to pay'. However, it recommended quarterly adjustment of wages based on the Commonwealth Statistician's A series index, which applied until 1953 - except for the 1931 decision to cut the real value of the basic wage by 10%. Following the Korean War boom, quarterly 'cost of living' increases were regarded as contributing to inflation and discontinued; in addition, margins for skill were moving more slowly than the basic wage, and relativities had been upset. This was remedied in the 1954 'Margins Case'.

'Equal pay' for women became a major issue in the late 1960s. Prior to World War 2, the social view was that the great majority of families were headed by a man who had to support his wife and children. Before marriage, women entering the work force had no family responsibilities and no need for the male basic rate. Equal pay was introduced in two stages: after the 1968 case, 'equal pay for equal work', i.e., equal to the male rate; in 1972, 'equal pay for work of equal value', a principle more relevant to jobs where males were not normally employed. The introduction of 'equal pay' was a further factor contributing to the destruction of the basic wage concept.

Between 1953 and 1967, the real value of the basic wage increased by only 2%, while real award wages grew by 14%, and real earnings by over 30%. The difference of more than 16% is called 'earnings drift'. These developments led to the Commission and Arbitration Commission, set up by the Act of 1956, fixing 'total' award wages directly, rather than considering the 'basic' and 'margin' components separately. Under the new wage fixing procedure, introduced in 1966-67, annual reviews of the total wage were made on general economic grounds, while commissioners conducted work value cases to adjust relativities or approved 'consent' awards between employers and unions.

The Commission also introduced, as an interim measure, a minimum wage 'to grant some relief to low [male] wage earners'. With the extension of this minimum wage to females, it became apparent that it had no relation to family needs. In 1974, the Commission declared that 'social welfare was clearly a task for Governments'.

In 1973, male awards increased by about 15%, some of it stimulated by the Whitlam Government's support. In 1974, the increase was 35%, obtained by collective bargaining and arbitration of awards, and associated with gross inflation and intense dislocation of relativities. There was constant pressure on the Commission to produce compromises as a dispute-settling authority.

Wage indexation, introduced in 1975 with the approval of the ACTU, may be defined as the regular adjustment of wages according to movements in prices, charted by the Consumer Price Index (CPI). Clyde Cameron, then Minister for Labor and Immigration, justified it as a means of bringing about stability and of protecting the members of weak unions. The unions claimed that it did no more than adjust wages for price increases already incurred; that it did not allow for changes in work value or for increased profitability; and that it was used by employers as an excuse for refusing claims in the 'conditions' area. One might add that neither does wage indexation consider overall movements in 'share of the cake', considerable fringe benefits, available unevenly in the work force, reduced profitability in hard-pressed firms, and demands based on booms that never become prosperity. Employees in the capital cities can maintain and improve their 'living standards' as a 'right' - even though the rural sector is besieged by drought, flood, fire, plague, transport strikes, and low prices on the international market. In spite of periodic 'partial' adjustments, indexation propped up the excessive 1975 wage levels. High wages provide a boost to consumption demand, which speeds up recovery by increasing productivity and lowering unit costs. However, since 1973, the Australian disease has been 'wage overhang' ahead of productivity; 'the rise of real wages in GDP at factor cost' at the expense of profitability; with resulting inflation, lack of international competitiveness, and unemployment.

The ACTU originally agreed with the Labor Government principle of a flat percentage increase to lower wage and salary earners, and a fixed money amount at all higher wage levels. However, this 'plateau principle' disturbed relativities - no matter where the cut-off point was placed. It was not acceptable to unions with members in higher wage brackets; during 1974, the gap between skilled and unskilled had narrowed and, despite Cameron's reluctance to provide 'more milk for the fat cats', Cabinet refused to intervene in a Public Service pay rise claim. In addition, relativities had already been upset in the period 1969-72 in the aftermath of introduction of the total wage. While a May, 1976, decision of the Commission added to its Guidelines (30 April, 1976), by allowing for the solutions of 'anomalies', the unions initiated disputes outside the Commission to seek over-award payments. The ACTU justified action by the fall in real wages after 1975.

## FAMILY ALLOWANCES

*Child Endowment*, a payment in ordinary circumstances to the mother, was introduced in 1942. Its initial value was 50 cents per week for the second and subsequent children. By 1971, successive alterations to the rates meant that a family with six children was entitled to $9.00. When in that year, the DLP Senate group moved a vote of no confidence in the Government for its neglect of the family allowance, the entire ALP representation voted with the Coalition. However, the 1971 Budget allowed for a small increase for the third child and subsequent children, the sum for six children rising to $11.00. In the 1976 Budget, following the Henderson Poverty Commission report (1975), the Liberal/National Party Government increased payments for the first three children (but not subsequent children). The scheme was financed by abolition of the taxation rebate. The net affects were as follows: the overall position of families was largely unaffected, but there was advantage to the poor unable to obtain rebates; within families, there was a re-distribution of income towards the mother.

From 1976 to 1981, there were substantial increases, averaging 50% (40-64%) in age pensions, veterans' pensions, handicapped, widows, supporting parents, unemployment and sickness benefits, but no movement in child endowment. The August, 1981, Budget provided for an increase of 50% in the allowances for families with more than two children. The 1982 Budget gave a similar increase for the first and second children, and families with income from employment, but at low wages, got a tax free Income Supplement of $10 a week for each dependent child.

The Labor Budgets (1983 and 1984) kept the figures steady, i.e., lower in real terms, even though tax cuts were provided for those on $100,000 a year. Families were hit hard by the abolition of the income tax rebate for basic health insurance and by imposition of the Medicare levy. Much of existing mortgage tax rebate and home deposit schemes were scrapped. None could escape the impact of strikes on inflation and employment. There were selective bans in power (1977); wool storemen and packers (1979-80); oil industry tanker drivers and aircraft refuellers (1980); Australia Post, Telecom (1981); rail in NSW (1983-84); public service (1984); and, over a long period, building construction and shipping.

## PARTY POLICIES

While others (cf. G.Barker, 'Hawke and the Corporate State', *The Age*, 9 April, 1983) have considered the scene, it has been best analysed by Katharine West in *The revolution in Australian Politics*. She describes the Hawke style of government as focusing on 'the three major power blocs in Australian society: government, big business and unionised labour... The basic thrust of the Hawke corporate Government has been management and control rather than representation of the full range of community opinion' (p. 3).

When the Prime Minister was interviewed by Burns, Barker and Grattan of *The Age* (23 November), he said: 'The greatest single thing that we can do to alleviate poverty is to create more jobs... We have halved inflation... We've brought down interest rates. We've brought homes within the reach of the poorer sections of the community... Inflation is the great robber - the great imposer of burdens upon the relatively under-privileged - and unless we pursue stringent macro-economic policies...pensioners and all people in the social welfare area will suffer.' *The Age* team commented: 'He seemed to think equity was about the real and absolute sizes and increases in social benefits rather than about the relative real shares of total wealth directed to various groups.

Hawke saw a 'trilogy' as indispensable to economic recovery and the prosperity of all, including the poor and those out-of-work: reduction in the Federal budget deficit; limitation of the rate of growth of Government expenditure and of taxation... *The Age* columnists wrote bitterly of this emphasis: 'Despite passing references to fairness, equity and justice, the speech displayed no profound commitment to the poor and underprivileged' (Barker, 14 November); 'its half-hearted performance on the three major moral issues of the time - nuclear war, aborigines and unemployment' (Barker, 17 November); 'the emphasis on sound economic management to encourage growth and employment with low inflation rather than on the re-distribution of wealth to ensure a fairer society' (Forell, 28 November).

West was even more critical of the Liberal Party and its leadership: Andrew Peacock reflected the influence... of small l Liberals (whose) perspectives encouraged the Liberal Party to abandon the social obligation it once acknowledged to protect and promote the stability and security of the married two-parent family as the preferred social unit for raising Australian children' (pp. 30-31).

The Liberal election proposal of 'income splitting' - for which Ian Wilson, Liberal member for Sturt, South Australia, had fought - had possibilities. Eric Risstrom, secretary of the Australian Taxpayers' Association, considered that the Coalition could have gone close to victory if the plan had been better presented. The primary beneficiaries would have been low-income families with children, but the details of the scheme as it applied to varying income and family size were vague. The only sensible form of taxation is a Family Unit Tax of which the French Quotient System is one example. Taxation, and it may be added 'poverty lines', should be based on household income. Indirect taxes already impose a heavy burden on families, and any increases would be hard to contain to 'luxury' items. Whatever their character, they would increase inflation and necessitate an unproductive bureaucracy. To recognise higher consumption costs, families would have to be compensated for by income tax rebates for dependants or by other concessions.

## LABOR VICTORY

Despite Labor's failure to define its policies on Migration, Defence, Land Rights, and Foreign Affairs, it was returned to office with a safe but reduced majority. While the Left attributed the partial success to deficiencies in the Hawke leadership, it was not successful in weakening his position and in the shrewd reshuffling of the Inner Cabinet. However, Brian Howe joined Stewart West in the expanded Cabinet (15 to 17), and his portfolio, 'Social Security', gave a member of the Left responsibility for 'welfare', which had been a target of their criticism. Defence Support was incorporated into the defence portfolio, not without protest from industry. Kim C. Beazley replaced Scholes as Minister for Defence. Senator Walsh became Minister for Finance, but this was in no sense a demotion for Dawkins, who was transferred to Trade, raising the question of whether he would pursue Bowen's protectionist policies. Dawkins will certainly seek to increase exports, which will also be the aim of Senator Button's Department of Industry, Technology and Commerce, which has been expanded at the expense of Barry Jones' portfolio, now limited to Science. In addition, Dawkins is to assist Mr Hawke in the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet. This now includes Youth Affairs, which had been transferred from Employment and Industrial Relations to Education after the 1983 election. These still remain overlapping departments with concerns for youth employment, but Dawkins will be the co-ordinator of the rationalisation of job training, education, and income support measures assisting the young to obtain permanent employment. The report of (Peter) Kirby, formerly head of Victoria's TAFE system, now assistant director general of employment and training, is providing a base for planning. However, the following issues remain controversial:

* wage rates for adolescents;
* the balance between spouse rebates, 'income splitting' measures, child endowment and child care rebates in taxation;
* the relation of these 'concessions' to the employment of adult women, particularly the married and single-parent, and the impact on youth employment.

Lionel Bowen became Attorney General, replacing Gareth Evans. The Left-wing Peter Steedman, who lost his seat for Casey, spoke for a lot of Australians when he said: 'I would suggest that we would probably be better served...if a lot of time was spent on reforming the legal system as it exists...rather than concentrating on academic, esoteric concepts like the Bill of Rights' (*The Age*, 3 December). The draft was not released prior to the election except to the selected, but 'leaks' suggested that terms were not defined, that it established 'Commonwealth supremacy even in those areas where the Commonwealth does not have specific or exclusive powers', and that it overrode any 'inconsistent' common law rule or any 'inconsistent' State legislation. The possible threat to parent rights in Education is evident in the statement of Lionel Murphy about the 1974 Bill, drafted with the help of Evans:

> In regard to religious education, the International Covenant does not establish, as has been contended, the 'right' of parents to ensure the religious education of their children in conformity with their own convictions.
>
> When the Covenant was drafted by the United Nations, the word 'liberty' was preferred to 'right' on the ground that the word 'right' might imply an obligation for Parties to the Convention to grant material assistance to private schools.

The learned lawyers chose to neglect consideration of Article 26 of the U.N. *Declaration of Human Rights!*

EDUCATION

Mr Hawke stated: 'We have ended the divisive and sterile State-aid debate...' (*Policy Speech*, 13 November). However, the ATF showed its disapproval by withdrawing campaigning support from the ALP and, in the ACT, working against Labor's no. 1 Senate candidate, Susan Ryan, with the slogan 'Censure Sue - Vote 2'.

Richard Johnson resigned as secretary of the Department for Education, his place being taken by Helen Williams. Ms Connors was appointed acting chairperson of the Schools Commission. Tannock became chairman and chief executive of the West Australian Catholic Education Commission. Helen Trinca commented that he was 'as always, unperturbed by what the teachers' unions might make of his decision to take such a partisan post' (*The Australian*, 21 January, 1985).

Davy resigned as president of the ATF, and Jennie George took his place on 6 March. She said that this role and her membership of the ACTU executive would give her 'greater authority to speak on a number of important issues'. The ATF would oppose Hawke's 'privatisation of education' and seek greater funding for public schools as 'promised in the ACTU-ALP accord'. (*The Australian*, 7 March, 1985).

A misleading report (*The Australian*, 19-20 January, 1985) was headed: 'School fees to jump in spite of aid boost'. With two exceptions, the figures were below 10%; the schools cited were all of high resource and had been subject to stringent reduction in grants during 1984. No consideration was given to the impact of reduced State funding or changes in categorisation by 'needs' criteria.

Tony Abbott (*The Bulletin*, 29 January, 1985) showed that educationalists of the 'right' and teacher union officials (NSW) of the 'left' were equally concerned with curricula, with the difficulty in making PEP effective, and with the problem of teacher/parent/departmental responsibilities in the operation of school councils.

*The Age* (5 January, 1985), evaluating 'alternative schools', criticised a fundamentalist school. A correspondent 'found it disappointing that no mention was made of the quietly growing group of parent-controlled Christian schools'. Labor's restrictions on new non-government schools will make this an issue in the future, particularly where the schools are small and lack system support. See p. 245 and ref 9, p. 254, considering *Planning and Funding Policies for New Non-Government Schools* (Preliminary Draft Report, CSC Panel, January, 1985), and pp. 264-265.

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# Abbreviations

ABS: Australian Bureau of Statistics

ACE: Australian College of Education or Accelerated Christian Education; briefly, 1983/84, Action Committee on Education in Victoria

ACER: Australian Council for Educational Research

ACES: Australian Council for Educational Standards

ACSPA: Australian Council of Salaried and Professional Associations

ACSSO: Australian Council of State School Organisations

ACT: Australian Commonwealth Territory

ACTU: Australian Council of Trade Unions

AEC: Australian Education Council

AHIGSA: Association of Heads of Independent Girls' Schools of Australia

AIS: Association of Independent Schools (V, NSW, etc.); affiliates of NCIS

ALP: Australian Labor Party

APC: Australian Parents' Council, with ten affiliates, Australia-wide. The affiliates in NSW and Victoria are also known as 'councils', but, in the other States and Territories, the older title 'federation of parents' and friends' associations' is used. In both South Australia and Tasmania, there are two affiliates, connected with 'Catholic 'and 'Independent' schools respectively.

ASSP: Australian Studies in Student Performance

ATF: Australian Teachers' Federation

ATU: Affiliated Teachers' Union, a Victorian union of mainly Catholic and independent school teachers. The same acronym is used by the Australian Teachers' Union, the name under which the ATF is seeking Federal registration under the Conciliation and Arbitration Act.

ATVCSS: Association of Teachers in Victorian Catholic Secondary Schools

CAE: College of Advanced Education

CEC: Catholic Education Commission, e.g., CECV

CEO: Catholic Education Office, e.g., CEOV

CSC: Commonwealth Schools Commission; formerly ASC (Australian)

CTEC: Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission

DLP: Democratic Labor Party

DOGS: Defence of Government Schools

ESL: English as a Second Language Program

HMC: Headmasters' Conference (of Australia)

HSC: Higher School Certificate

IARTV: Incorporated Association of Registered Teachers of Victoria

ITA: Independent Teachers' Association, the NSW affiliate of the ITF

ITF: Independent Teachers' Federation

NCEC: National Catholic Education Commission

NCIS: National Council of Independent Schools

NSWTF: NSW Teachers' Federation

PEP: Participation and Equity Program

QATIS: Queensland Association of Teachers in Independent Schools

QTU: Queensland Teachers' Union

SAIT: South Australian Institute of Teachers

TAA: Teachers' Association of Australia

TACS: Title of periodical of ATVCSS/VCPTA

TRRS: Target Recurrent Resource Standard(s) UNICORN: Journal of the Australian College of Education

VAT: Victorian Association of Teachers (now VTF)

VATIS: Victorian Association of Teachers in Independent Schools

VCPTA: Victorian Catholic Primary Teachers' Association

VICCSO: Victorian Council of (State) School Organisations

VFSSPC: Victorian Council of State School Parents' Clubs; formerly VFSSMC

VISE: Victorian Institute of Secondary Education

VPC: Victorian Parents' Council

VSTA: Victorian Secondary Teachers' Association

VTF: Victorian Teachers' Federation; formerly VAT

VTHC: Victorian Trades Hall Council

VTU: Victorian Teachers' Union

TAFE: Technical and Further Education

TTUV: Technical Teachers' Union of Victoria, formerly TTAV (Association)

# Glossary

*This glossary also serves as an INDEX OF TERMS. The numbers refer to chapters which concentrate on the topic or contain sections which give it special attention. This procedure gives the reader actual information rather than incidental mention.*

ACCESS (10): The opportunity for all children - irrespective of sex, race, religion, intellectual ability or handicap - to enrol at a school. Not all restrictions are censurable, e.g., there are single sex and intellectually 'selective' schools in the government sector. No school excludes students on the base of race. Non-government schools, generally, accept pupils of differing religion as long as the individual student/parents are willing to respect the character (*) of the school and the numbers obtaining entry do not lead to loss of character. The great problem with access is that, with present funding from Government revenue, no non-government school can remain viable without fees from parents. As the Report of the Ministerial Committee of Review into the Impact of Radford College stated: 'Our conclusion is that the only real way in which most private schools could operate at resource levels comparable to public schools, and be accessible to the general community, would be for governments to substantially increase the level of their financial support' (Schools for the ACT, Chapter 6, Volume 3).

ACCOUNTABILITY (17; 23): A term often limited to financial matters, but also applied to educational 'outcomes', legal responsibility for safety of pupils, and damage done by harmful curricula or by unfavourable school environments. There is much dissatisfaction with the lack of accountability of schools or school systems, particularly when many parents have little or no choice. The ATF and Governments demand more and more financial data from non-government schools - in spite of the comprehensive questionnaires of the Schools Commission, which has acknowledged the integrity of the schools and their proper use of grants. Statements of recurrent expenditure (*) from the State Departments have been deficient in a number of respects. There has been reluctance in many States to reveal data on real government school costs (*). Scrutiny has shown that many grants to non-government schools are below the well-publicised '20%' figure; in addition, certain items, e.g., superannuation, are given insufficient weight. Despite the heroic efforts of many teachers, some of their colleagues - and some 'experts' and bureaucrats - have contributed to situations in which 'outcomes' have been poor, and there has been 'social' or moral damage to pupils.

ACCREDITATION (26): Credit, recognition, certification - following the completion of studies.

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION (5; 18; 30): A policy aiming to redress alleged 'discrimination' or 'inequality' on such grounds as class, race or sex, including 'inequality of opportunity'.

ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL: A departure from the conventional or traditional school in which words such as 'fail', 'homework', and 'authority' give way to 'discover', 'create', and 'freedom'. Where a traditional school is said to 'transmit' knowledge, students in an alternative school 'interact' with teachers, other students, and with the real world. Or such is the theory. Cf. 'community school' (*).

BASIC GRANT (1-5; 22): A term used to express the entitlement (*) of each child to a grant for its education. The question at issue is 'What is an equitable grant?', having regard to the nature of the school - government or non-government, the recurrent resources of the school, the income and family size of the individual parent, and the sacrifice that the parent(s) are prepared to make for the education of their children. Many, including those in the non-government sector, confuse a 'basic grant' with the 'minimum grant' provided by a Government committed to 'needs-based' funding. This monograph maintains that to set a 'basic grant' at an unreasonably low level or to whittle it away in real or relative terms is not equitable. See, also 'vouchers' (*)

BASKET OF SERVICES: The CSC's assessment of the recurrent expenditure (*), and the expenditure, desirable in the staffing and equipping of schools.

BLOCK GRANT (4): The lump sum given to a non-government school system (*) for distribution to schools on the basis of 'need'.

CAPITAL EXPENDITURE: The cost of acquiring a fixed asset and of placing it in a condition that is suitable for a school's use. Some examples are: construction of buildings; library and classroom furniture; science, audio visual and gymnasium equipment; alterations and improvement to buildings, depending on the nature of the work; grounds development (as distinct from grounds' maintenance).

CAPITAL GRANT (1; 15): Commonwealth moneys for building (science laboratories, libraries, and general purposes). State Governments receive block grants which they apportion as they see fit. Grants for non-government schools are recommended by Finance and Planning Committees in each State - subject to approval by the Schools Commission. The 1984 Guidelines allocated 25.7% of the total Federal capital funding to the non-government sector, which receives no funding from any State. With the exception of South Australia, the States give varying help in interest payments on capital used for building.

CAREERS GUIDANCE: See Vocation (*).

CATEGORISATION (2): The classification of non-government schools (*) according to recurrent resources. It began in 1973 with Karmel's eight categories. From 1976 to 1980 there were six levels; from 1981 to 1983 there were three groups. With the introduction of community standard (*) theory by the Labor Government in 1983, the 'hit-list' (*) of high resource / high fee schools generated an extra group, 1(a). The 1984 Guidelines have created twelve categories for the period to 1992!

CHARACTER (6-8; 21): Schools and teachers play a vital part in the transmission of value - judgments and world views to the young. Yet, it is a world of cultural pluralism, and it is essential that the child should be nurtured in an environment which reproduces features found in the home and that the parents should 'have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children'. All schools have, of course, an obligation to take an active part in the construction of a community, through which the building of society itself is promoted. This is, first, effected through the co-operation of diverse educational institutions, and the formation of young people of integrity, with a respect for others, but a clear understanding of what is base and evil. Differences in religious belief, and the inadequacy of existing schools to cater for education in national cultures, make it inevitable that parents will seek to form schools with what has been termed a special 'character'.

COMMUNITY COLLEGE (26): A term used in Victoria for schools proposed for Year 11 and 12 students only.

COMMUNITY SCHOOL: An 'alternative' originating in the failure of a government school to obtain success with some pupils. A decision is made to change the child's environment from a classroom setting to a nearby house or converted building, where numbers are small and the teaching informal and personal. Such schools are 'annexes', still attached to the parent school for administrative purposes, but they are otherwise autonomous and have their own separate staff. Cf. 'alternative school' (*). The ATF uses the term 'community school' to mean 'supported school' as defined by the Schools Commission; see 'non-government schools' (*).

COMMUNITY STANDARD (6; 15; 17; 22; 23 for TRRS): Originally a vague term used by the Labor Party to indicate inputs into education above the 'standard' available in government schools. The Labor 1983 Guidelines required the Schools Commission to develop a 'standard' giving 'the basic education resource needs of students in a typical school'. In 1984, the recurrent grants to 41 non-government schools, with 'private' inputs above what was considered 'reasonable' were reduced. They became known as the 'hit-list' (*) schools. In presenting the 1984-85 Budget, the Government adopted a system of funding based on the Commission's 'community standard' ($2195 per primary student and $3240 per secondary student at December, 1983 prices); a 10% supplement was applied to government schools. All except the first two of the twelve non-government school categories will obtain increases in real terms during the period 1985-92, but if government schools attain the standards set (in some States and Territories they are now very close!), the non-government sector, as a whole, will be worse off than under the nexus (*). Finally, little consideration has been given to to the close connection between the recurrent resources built into the community standard and the capital cost involved in creating the infrastructure in which they can be realised.

CURRICULUM (26): The subject matter to be taught in schools. It is generally divided into a core, which all study, and electives. Current policies have been to reduce demanding 'academic' aspects of the core and to increase opportunity in choice of electives, particularly those related to practical, life-centred topics and student interests.

DISPOSABLE INCOME (14): School 'private' income, considered by the Schools Commission - as well as expenditure (used in calculation of the School Recurrent Resource Index) - when making an assessment of the 'subsidy' level for a recurrent grant. As a result, high fee schools have been subjected to more stringent evaluation.

ENTITLEMENT: The judgment that every Australian child has a right (*) to Government support of its education through the taxation moneys contributed by the community for this purpose. In material terms, this is full funding in the government system and a much smaller 'basic grant' (*), varying from 11% to 20% since 1974, for children in non-government schools. There is a 'needs' (*) component where the child is deprived, but funding is interpreted by different criteria in the two sectors of education.

EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY (11): A term with a variety of meanings: an equality of resources in all schools, a principle which arises from the notion of equity in access to resources; the provision of extra resources for those who start with a handicap of any nature; an equality of 'outcomes' which was associated, first, with the requirement that all reach a minimum standard and, secondly, that 'disadvantaged' sub-groups (aboriginals, migrants, females, etc.) should receive special consideration so that they might be equally represented in the various strata of status, wealth and influence of the community .

FINANCIAL VIABILITY (1985- ): An assessment of the CSC that a school can 'operate at an adequate resource standard on a sound financial basis'. The criteria are ability to pay award salaries and meet other associated staff costs; and to provide appropriate physical facilities and a level of resources, both teaching and non-teaching, which satisfy the registration requirements of the relevant State. Proposed schools must be able to demonstrate viability both with or without Commonwealth capital assistance. The 'Guidelines 1985-88' state that the school must demonstrate the capacity 'to provide an adequate level of resources over the first five years'. The CSC's recommendation to the Minister will be based on consideration of the following factors: socio-economic indicators; the support of a wider community; level of fees, concessions and remissions; and the operations of a building fund, including the rate of contributions and whether voluntary or compulsory. See 'new schools'

GOVERNMENT SCHOOL COSTS (19; 27; 30): Calculated from recurrent expenditure (*) in a government school (primary or secondary) by dividing by the number of pupils. This figure has been used by the States as a basis for determining their grants to non-government school pupils. The accountability (*) of the States, and the accuracy of figures released during the past decade, has been questioned on various occasions. Queensland provides no estimate at all! Commonwealth grants have been based on an average of per pupil costs in the States. This has produced anomalies, favouring non-government schools in States where there was low cost and/or low resource schooling in the State sector.

GUIDELINES (11-14; 19; 24): The practice - initiated in 1975 by the Whitlam Government - of supplying strict budgetary conditions to the Schools Commission for its detailed consideration. While the Commission has commented freely, its power to initiate change is constrained by the financial and program directives of the Government.

'HIT-LIST' (19; 20): See Categorisation; Community Standard; Rich /Wealthy.

IMPACT (22-24): The principle that new schools should not seriously threaten the educational and financial viability of existing schools. While a distinction is made between 'developing' and 'established' areas, there is no clear definition to enable demarcation. The following factors are to be considered in assessing 'significant adverse impact': enrolments; reduction of curriculum options and programs for minority groups; staffing; financial operations; and under-utilisation of capital facilities. The word 'impact' is now giving way to phrases such as 'adequate consultation with education authorities of the State in which the school is situated' (as in the 1984 Bill) or 'prior consultation and, where possible, joint planning with State education authorities' (as in a CSC document). The clauses apply to non-government schools only, as the State is under no legal obligation to consider the wishes of parents when it is building schools with taxpayers' moneys; nor are such decisions, in any way, a Commonwealth responsibility. See 'new schools' (*).

INCOME ASSESSMENT PROCEDURE (1984) (14; 19; see,also, ref 28, Ch 28): Divide 'A': 'Recurrent expenditure from private sources, as for SRRI' (*) by 'B': 'Recurrent income from private sources (net of debt servicing commitments) and express as a percentage. If above 75%, funding is generally determined by the SRRI; if below 75, the school's complete financial situation is examined to determine whether it could reasonably increase the proportion of its income allocated to recurrent operations and operate at a lower grant level. 'A' is defined as total expenditure from all sources in relation to items included in SRRI, including the value of contributed services, less all Commonwealth and State recurrent grants other than interest subsidies. 'B' is defined as income for tuition purposes from: school fees for recurrent and capital purposes; other net receipts from students; church or parish grants; other income from private sources (including parent organisations); and the value of contributed services.

INDEX OF DISADVANTAGE: A comprehensive Schools Commission index (1973, revised in 1980) which is based on schools in Australian census districts, so that those in socially/economically deprived locations may benefit. Such schools can apply for grants under the Disadvantaged Schools Program. There are, of course, other Schools Commission programs assisting the 'disadvantaged'.

INDEXATION: A term used variously to indicate an allowance for inflation; also known, recently, as 'outcomes' and 'retrospective cost supplementation'. The term 'indexation' has also been used when increases in government school costs and the use of the nexus (*) demand extra moneys to meet grants for non-government school pupils.

INTEGRATION (28): The concept of forming a single school system to replace the dual system existing at the moment. The central idea is that non-government schools which seek high levels of funding should accept restrictions on their autonomy. The proposal is unacceptable to the non-government sector. The poorer schools, which have no finance to increase resources, would be the most seriously affected. The word 'integration' is also associated with 'special education' (*).

MAINTENANCE OF EFFORT: The demand / request that State Governments continue to apportion the percentage of their Budget devoted to education and that non-government schools maintain their fees/other private cash inputs. The 'popular' and, indeed, the official claim is that fees paid in 1973 should be 'maintained' in real terms in 1985. Even if one accepts 'maintenance of effort' theory , this demand is unsound. The relevant item is the 'net fee' after allowing for the tax deduction available prior to 1974 and appropriately indexing to 1985. The Schools Commission recognises that it can do little to stipulate requirements for the maintenance of 'contributed services' of religious who are now available in decreasing numbers.

MODERATION (26): An alternative to external examinations in which the performance of a student is judged 'internally' after meetings of teachers from schools in the region to compare and assure that comparable standards of assessment are employed.

NEEDS (1-4; 15; 16; 22): A 'need' is something which is reasonably required. R. Jackson of SAIT said at the 1984 NCIS conference: 'All schools have "needs" - no matter how disadvantaged or privileged. SAIT defines "real needs" on the basis of "average facilities of an average State school".' This statement recognises the 'need' of all for the basic necessities of schooling, but fails to differentiate it from the 'need' of the child in 'special' or necessitous circumstances or of the school in an unfavourable environment. The principle in Australia is that those attending government schools should have all their needs met by subsidies from the public purse, with minimal outlay from parents (some say none) on items directly or indirectly connected with education. In other words, the rich (*) sending their children to elite government schools, selective or in attractive residential areas, have all their 'needs' met; the poor in the State sector receive only marginal extra assistance through 'programs'. Some say that those unwilling, for any reason, to send their children to these schools should receive no support from Governments, and others maintain that assistance should vary inversely with private inputs into the school. The rich (*) sending their children to high quality non-government schools receive a minimum and minimal grant, currently 12% of the community standard (*); those of modest means, including the poor, are expected to achieve success in schools operating with 70% of State school resources.

NEW SCHOOLS (22-24; 28): Until 1983, all 'non-government schools', registered (*) by a State, were provided with Commonwealth recurrent funding. This is no longer the case; they are subject to various additional tests, including 'impact' (*) and 'financial viability' (*).

NEXUS (17; 22): Government grants have been allocated on various grounds : arbitrarily as in Victoria (1974 & 1975) or Queensland today; 'needs' as in the South Australian 'modified Potts' formula introduced in 1984; through a nexus in which a link/connection is established with government school costs (*) and a percentage allocated for the 'minimum grant' and an additional sum for a 'needs' component: or, as in Commonwealth funding (1985- ), a percentage of a 'community standard' (*).

'NON-GOVERNMENT' SCHOOLS (3; 5; 8; 23; 27): A term used in the Schools Commission Act (1973) for schools which are not part of the 'public' (*) sector. They are not 'private', i.e., run for profit by an individual or partnership. Those who have named them 'private' obviously wish to highlight the issue of 'access' (*). The schools are not fully independent as they are subject to various conditions of operation associated with registration and have to provide details of their finances before their students can receive recurrent grants from Governments. When considered from the standpoint of funding, such schools might be 'Self Supporting' (a proposed category receiving no Government funds); 'Subsidised or Assisted' (the position in 1984 and 1985); 'Supported or Maintained' - a proposed category of schools which would receive 90% or more of government school per pupil funding, but would be subject to some restrictions on 'character' (*).

PER CAPITA GRANTS (1-5): Per pupil grants given by Governments to schools on the basis of enrolments according to type: primary, middle or senior secondary, and, generally, varying according to some form of 'needs' assessment. The term 'per capita' has had confused use when applied to the non-government sector, e.g., it has been associated with those alleged to defend equal funding for all children, irrespective of circumstance. The 'per capita grant' is strictly a grant to parents / guardians; the schools would not receive the moneys if the child were not enrolled. Accounts of expenses for the child should list a total from which grants are deducted to indicate fees payable.

POST-PRIMARY SCHOOLS (26): Institutions which educate pupils in Years 7 to 12. The use of the term 'post-primary' is now linked with the development of schools, which have previously been termed 'comprehensive', i.e., they admit all children and provide a wide variety of courses to cater for different interests and abilities. In Victoria, the terms 'secondary high' and 'junior secondary technical' school are being phased out.

PRE-SCHOOLING: A term which should not be confused with 'child care'. The term 'pre-schooling' is properly applied to the 'kindergarten', where the child is given a grounding in the three R's and provided with an interesting environment encouraging co-operation with other children in games and dance, in play acting and story telling, and in the practice of skills.

PRIMARY SCHOOLS: Institutions which educate pupils aged from seven to twelve in Years 3 to 6. The Queensland Education Department has, however, proposed a restructuring into a three-tiered system for Years 1-3, 4-10, with Years 11 and 12 being integrated into TAFE institutions.

PROGRESSIVE EDUCATION: Schooling dispensing with the customary subjects, emphasising life and community centred material, and giving reduced attention to text-book learning. See 'community school' (*).

PUBLIC SCHOOLS: A term once used for an association of a few independent schools of standing, but now more commonly employed for government schools which collectively constitute the 'public' sector.

RECURRENT EDUCATION: A concept associated with the idea that education should not be confined to a single block, but should be available, as needed, to persons throughout life. Practical aims are to provide protection against cyclical unemployment, greater social / occupational mobility, and increased job satisfaction.

RECURRENT EXPENDITURE (2-4; 19; 23; 27; 30): This item covers all expenditure incurred in order to run a school and maintain its assets in good order and condition, e.g., administrative and clerical costs, salaries of teachers and ancillary staff, provisions for long service leave, stores, stationery, post, and library books, grants to schools, maintenance, insurance and allowance for depreciation, superannuation, workers' compensation, and debt charges. Accurate estimates of expenditure for government schools are very difficult to obtain.

REGISTRATION (22): That form of State approval which grants the right to operate as a school under appropriate State legislation.

REMEDIAL EDUCATION (26): Begins with an analysis of the causes (nervous or physical disabilities, poor health, disturbances in the family, classroom distractions, bad grading, etc.) of failure of children to comprehend or to utilise teaching. Identification of the cause(s) must be followed by a change in teaching methods designed to rectify the situation. Also, see 'special education' (*).

RICH/WEALTHY (19; 20): Non-government schools in Category A (Karmel), Level 1 or Group 1 (1976-83) or placed on the 'hit-list' (*) of 1984 have been referred to as wealthy (rich), with the intention of being offensive. A more proper phrase is high recurrent resource/high fee; this does not necessarily suggest high capital resource. The discussion of 'needs' (*) refers to rich/wealthy parents and to schools of varying quality in both sectors - government and non-government.

RIGHTS (6; 18; 22): of parent and child. See 'entitlement' (*).

SCHOOLS COMMISSION PROGRAMS (11; 30): Financial allocations (1984) were as follows: General Resource (Recurrent, 67.0%; Capital, 16.1%); Special Purpose (Govt, 11.2%; Non-govt, 2.8%; Joint, 2.9%).

SCHOOLS RECURRENT RESOURCE INDEX: An index used by the CSC to help assess non-government schools and systems in order to determine appropriate grant levels under the General Recurrent Grants Program.

SRRI is obtained by dividing 'A': 'Recurrent expenditure from private sources' by 'B': 'Resources required to operate at national average government school standards' and expressing as a percentage. 'A' = 'total recurrent expenditure' (essentially *) less Government recurrent grants; 'A' excludes rent, interest paid on loans, capital expenditure, and the cost associated with operating borading facilities. 'B' = Census enrolment x National average government school standard cost per student x Enrolment size adjustment factor.

SPECIAL EDUCATION (26): That field of education which considers the needs of mentally or physically handicapped children. Those with mild handicaps have always been in the 'regular' schools, but those with extreme handicaps were educated in 'special' schools. They are now being 'integrated' (*) into normal schooling in both the government and non-government sectors. 'Special' pupils should be distinguished from students needing 'remedial' education (*). Where the latter fail to make progress, they may or may not have some 'handicap', as defined above.

STANDARD (15; 23; 26): 'Standard' has had varying usage since 1975 when it was related to 'government school standard costs'; one sees criticism, of schools (they may have good educational 'outcomes') which are sub-standard in respect to recurrent resources/expenditure (*). There are community standards (*) which are to be targets (*) for recurrent resource; there are architectural standards to be met in use of capital grants.

STATE AID: A term which has been applied to assistance given to non-government (*) schools which are not owned directly and administered by a State or Territory Government. It takes the form of recurrent (*) grants on a per pupil basis or capital (*) grants for building. It is based on the principle that Government should be seen as concerned with the education of each child, because it is an Australian and/or the parents/guardians are taxpayers. If this principle confers a 'right' and 'entitlement' (*), then the phrase 'State Aid' is a misnomer. All political parties agree, in practice, to a grant ('basic' (*) or minimum, the real significance of neither word being defined), supplemented by a 'needs' (*) component. However, there has been no clarity in the debate on the value of these grants and the means of assessment.

STREAMING: The separation of students in the same year of study into different classes. This is sometimes associated with the subjects chosen and/or the level at which they are taught.

SYSTEM (4; 5): A group of schools under some form of central jurisdiction, e.g., the Government system or the Catholic, Lutheran or Seventh Day Adventist systems in the non-government sector. All Catholic schools are within this 'system' in the sense that they collaborate in matters of religious education, industrial relations, etc. However, a number are 'non-systemic', i.e., they lie outside the administration of the Catholic Education Offices in funding matters. The Schools Commission allocates block grants (*) to the Catholic Commissions, but treats the categorisation (*) of the 'non-systemic' schools separately. See Ch 23 for the concept of 'aggregation'.

TARGETS (2-4; 13; 23): The idea of target is related to the concept of a 'standard' (*) of recurrent resources in a school. The report (1973) of the Interim Committee set targets for government schools according to upward movements in the 'Karmel Index', and these were met within the required dates. There was no published data on the individual Karmel indices of high resource non-government schools, and any attempt to analyse time trends in the non-Catholic ('other') sector has been made impossible by the appearance of new schools of lower resource. Recurrent resources have increased in Catholic schools, as is evident from teacher/pupil ratios ; however, almost all the Catholic schools have for some years operated with 70% of government school recurrent resources.

TRIENNIUM (11): Commission reports have recommended budgetary allocations over a three year period. Fiscal difficulties led to discontinuance of the practice after the first triennial report for 1975-78, but it was followed by reports for 'rolling' triennia, 1977-79, 1978-80, and 1979-81 to accompany annual Government guidelines (*) and Commission reports. The practice was dropped and the latest report is for 1982-84; a report for 1985-87 was deferred at the request of Senator Ryan, whose Guidelines for 1985 ensure funding increases through to 1988.

VOCATION: Originally associated with a divine 'call' to religious life or the ministry; now identified with 'vocational guidance', which considers all those factors essential to the spiritual, intellectual, moral and material well-being of a person. 'Vocational guidance' should be distinguished from 'Careers guidance' (*), which seeks to ascertain the fitness of a person for a particular career or occupation.

VOUCHER (16; 22; 23; 30): A term used for 'educational credits' - not cash payments - to parents / guardians of children to meet the cost of schooling. The purpose of a voucher is to promote freedom of choice and economic equity among parents. A voucher does not differ in principle from the 'grants' (*) paid, at present, to a non-government school or system, for the education of the child and to defray, in part, the 'fee' expenses of the parent. A voucher may be 'regulated' or 'unregulated', i.e., supplements may or may not be made from 'private' sources. At present, the greater the private income / resources of a non-government school, the less the value of the grant; there are no such restrictions on government schools. A voucher system may be 'compensatory' or 'non-compensatory', i.e., it may or may not provide additional 'educational credits' - in the form of a supplementary voucher. Present programs to disadvantaged or handicapped pupils, if funded to schools as grants on a per capita basis, can be regarded as equivalent to vouchers. Maintenance allowances, paid to families, are not vouchers - even though they may play a significant role in determining educational 'outcomes'. To achieve equity among parents / guardians, it is essential that the value of the voucher should be taxed so that the poor obtain free education and those of greater means pay according to their 'capacity' and family responsibilities.

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